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Government of
Saskatchewan

Creating a Healthy, Just, Prosperous and Safe Saskatchewan:

A Response to the Commission on
First Nations and Métis Peoples
and Justice Reform

A number of provincial government departments have directed significant funding to a broad range of initiatives in 2005-2006 that respond to the Commission's recommendations.

For 2005-2006, more than $48 million in new funding will be invested in responding to the recommendations. While some of this new funding is directed to new initiatives, some will be directed to enhancing or expanding existing programs. A number of the initiatives outlined in the Action Plan are targeted specifically to First Nations and Métis peoples, while others, though not targeted, will have a significant positive impact on Aboriginal people.

Dealing with the underlying causes of crime

- Public education to encourage racial harmony will help eliminate racism and encourage mutual understanding and respect.
- Projects will provide Aboriginal youth with leadership training to build stronger communities for the future.
- The provincial Alcohol and Drug Strategy will be targeted to youth, Aboriginal people, street people and northern residents. Initiatives to combat the use of Crystal Meth are important components of the strategy.
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder programs will be strengthened to provide more prevention, diagnosis and support services for individuals and families.
- The development of shared educational standards between provincial and First Nations schools will support smoother transitions for students that move between First Nations schools and provincial schools.
- To enable young people to acquire the skills they need in tomorrow's job market, 1,000 new training opportunities will be provided under Career Start.
- Aboriginal post-secondary students will receive support through the Aboriginal Bursary Program, Gradworks, the University of Saskatchewan Math and Science Enrichment Program, and the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Program.
- The Education of Youth in Custody program will help ensure young people are successful in learning once they are released from custody and return to school.
- 600 new housing units will be added in 2005, with the goal of 2,000 new units by 2008, to ensure safe, affordable housing for families.
- The new Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement will help ensure low-income families and households of people with disabilities have adequate places to live.
- 500 new child care spaces will be created and families with children with special needs will no longer wait for child care.
- Crime reduction strategies will be implemented in Meadow Lake and Prince Albert.

Increasing the involvement of Aborig.nal people and groups in justice processes

- 49 new police positions will be added over three years, with a focus on recruiting Aboriginal officers.
- 18 new police positions will be added in 2005-2006.
- An Aboriginal Provincial Court Party will be established in Meadow Lake, with a full-time translator, to travel to communities in northwest Saskatchewan.
- Cree and Dene speaking Justices of the Peace will be appointed in two northern communities.

Using alternatives to court and incarceration

- Victims services programs will be expanded to serve Stony Rapids and Black Lake.
- Funding is being provided to enable the North Battleford Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court to enhance counseling, provide child counseling, and offer prevention information.
- A Domestic Violence Court will be created in Saskatoon.
- Justice will develop a community safety plan for dealing with family and interpersonal violence in one or more northern communities.
- The number of adult alternative measures referrals will be increased by 1,000 across the province.

Improving justice system responses

- A new independent police public complaints commission will be created in 2005.
- Replacement of the 1913 portion of the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre is underway, to be completed by 2008.
- A program to reduce violence and re-offending will be introduced in correctional centres to ensure a positive transition from custody to the community for inmates.
- The coroner's system will undergo significant growth and development over the next three years.
- The number of offenders remanded into custody due to bail violations, failure to appear in court or escaping custody will be reduced, enabling people to remain in their communities with adequate supervision and support while they await trial.

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Message from the Minister of Justice and Attorney General and the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

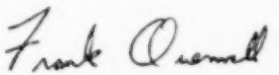
In 2005, Saskatchewan is celebrating its Centennial as a province. Our Centennial provides a wonderful opportunity to focus on the future – to think about and plan for Saskatchewan's second century. An important part of that future is strong and vibrant communities, and healthy and self-reliant families. Changing the relationship between Aboriginal people and the justice system to reduce offending and victimization within Aboriginal communities will ensure that Saskatchewan remains an ideal place to live, work and raise a family.

The Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform has made an important contribution to understanding the relationship between the issues facing Aboriginal communities, and the changes that are needed so that all Saskatchewan people will share a healthy, just, safe and prosperous province. We greatly appreciate the efforts of the members of the Commission, and the contributions of all those who shared their experiences and advice with them.

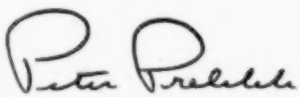
Research shows us that crime can be reduced through early intervention with children, social development, and effective practices in the justice system. The most effective strategies are those that combine initiatives to reduce crime and improve social and economic development. Our Action Plan reflects this approach by addressing social and economic issues, while implementing initiatives to reduce crime and victimization.

This Action Plan increases the number of partnerships with Aboriginal communities, government and organizations, the federal government, the justice system and human services. It involves new initiatives and builds on the programs, policies and strategies that already exist to improve the daily lives of Aboriginal children, families and communities. It addresses a wide range of matters identified by the Commission, from racism and skills development to crime prevention, increasing the number of Aboriginal people employed in the justice system, and reforms or new initiatives in policing, the courts, and the correctional system.

As we begin our province's second century, we acknowledge the achievements of First Nations and Métis peoples, and we are committed to working with our partners to continue along the path of creating a healthy, just, prosperous and safe Saskatchewan for all.



Frank Quennell, Q.C
Minister of Justice and Attorney General



Peter Prebble
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

The Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform was established by the Government of Saskatchewan on November 15, 2001.

The Commission's mandate was to identify efficient, effective and financially responsible reforms to the justice system. The objective of these reforms was to reduce offending and victimization, leading to reduced incarceration and safer communities for First Nations and Métis peoples. The Commission was also mandated to identify both short-term and long-term implementation strategies, and a vehicle to oversee the implementation of its recommendations.

The Commission heard more than 40 presentations, conducted 12 roundtables, visited justice facilities, and held town hall meetings in Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina.

The Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform produced three interim reports, releasing its final report on June 21, 2004. The Commission made 104 main recommendations and 29 sub-recommendations in its final report and 15 recommendations in the interim reports. The final report addresses a number of issues including: leadership; crime prevention; victimization and violence; restorative justice; policing; justice institutions; racism; and children and youth.

The recommendations of the Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform are echoed by the recommendations of The Honourable Mr. Justice David H. Wright, Commissioner of the Stonechild Inquiry, who referred to "the two solitudes" and the "chasm that separates Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people" in Saskatchewan.

The Changing Face of Saskatchewan

Aboriginal people make up about 13.5 per cent of Saskatchewan's population (2001 Census). By 2045, Aboriginal people may account for one-third of our province's population.

More than one quarter of kindergarten-aged children are Aboriginal, and this figure is expected to increase to almost half by 2016. Almost four in 10 Saskatchewan Aboriginal people are 14 years of age and under, compared to 18.7 per cent of non-Aboriginal people. The median age of the Saskatchewan Aboriginal population is about 20; the median age of the non-Aboriginal population is about 38.

Nearly half of all First Nations people live off-reserve, often in larger urban centres like North Battleford, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Regina and Yorkton. More Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan live in poverty, have low education levels and have health problems than non-Aboriginal people.

Education and Employment

Young Aboriginal people will form a large and productive pool of labour and talent to help Saskatchewan meet changing labour market demand. Education helps to determine employment and the key to Saskatchewan's future lies in our ability to provide relevant and responsive education and training for young Aboriginal people.

There is a significant gap between education levels for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Fewer Aboriginal people aged 25 to 44 (37 per cent) had a post-secondary certificate or degree, compared to non-Aboriginal people (54 per cent) in the same age group.

Unemployment among Aboriginal people is currently five times higher than for non-Aboriginal people. Unemployment among Aboriginal people aged 15 to 24 was about 29 per cent, compared to 11 per cent for non-Aboriginal people that age. Overall, on-reserve First Nations people had the highest unemployment rate in 2001 at 32 per cent.

Together with lower levels of education and higher unemployment, poverty is a serious problem among Aboriginal individuals and families, although income levels are improving. The average income of Aboriginal people was slightly more than half that of non-Aboriginal people in 2000. The average family income for a single-parent Aboriginal family was about half that for a single-parent family headed by a non-Aboriginal person in 2000.

Crime and Victimization

Many Aboriginal communities, particularly in inner-city neighbourhoods, on reserve and in northern Saskatchewan, have high crime rates. Saskatchewan's on-reserve crime rate is about twice the crime rate in rural or urban areas, and the violent crime rate is about five times higher.

In our province, Aboriginal people are more likely to be victims of crime than non-Aboriginal people. In 1997, Aboriginal people accounted for 10 per cent of the populations of Regina

and Prince Albert combined, but 42 per cent of the victims of violent crime.

Domestic violence is a particularly serious problem – nationally, Aboriginal women are at least three times as likely to be victims of domestic violence, and eight times more likely to be the victim of a spousal homicide. In households where domestic violence occurs, children witness the violence in 47 per cent of Aboriginal households, and in 37 per cent of non-Aboriginal households.

Although about 10 per cent of Saskatchewan's adult population is Aboriginal, based on the average daily counts in provincial correctional centres, about 30 per cent of those in custody are Aboriginal.

While about 19 per cent of the Saskatchewan population aged 12 to 17 is Aboriginal, 80 per cent of youth in secure or open custody in the Young Offender system are Aboriginal.

Signs of Progress

While the disadvantages facing many First Nations and Métis peoples are significant, there is reason to be optimistic about the future.

Governments, Aboriginal leaders, police and communities are working together to make a difference in the daily lives of Aboriginal children, women, men and families. Improvements have already been achieved. However, more can – and must – be done.

First Nations, Tribal Councils, Métis organizations and community-based Aboriginal agencies are involved in delivering programs ranging from education and child and family services, to justice and corrections. Seventy of the 72 First Nations in the province are involved in the delivery of community justice programs, and Métis Family and Community Justice Services provides community justice programs at three locations. Sixteen Aboriginal agencies or governments offer courtworker programs and the File Hills Police Service is in the process of becoming the first self-administered First Nations police service in the province. First Nations and Aboriginal communities in northern Saskatchewan are involved in Aboriginal policing initiatives.

Three Tribal Councils offer youth reintegration programs, and six First Nations and two Aboriginal day programs provide services to youth who are in conflict with the criminal justice system.

A growing number of Aboriginal people are working to further their education in our province. In 2001, 62 per cent of Aboriginal people aged 25 to 44 had at least completed grade 12, compared to 56 per cent five years earlier. More than half of the students who participate in Adult Basic Education and literacy programs are Aboriginal. In 2005-2006, 75 per cent of students enrolled in mining and forestry sector training will be Aboriginal.

An increasing number of Aboriginal people are joining the provincial labour force. More than 1,900 Aboriginal people have been hired through the Aboriginal Employment Development Program that involves employers, unions, educational institutions and government.

Our Vision

Working together to create a healthy, just, prosperous and safe Saskatchewan.

Our Goals

- Improve individual and community well-being of First Nations and Métis peoples.
- A justice system that responds to the needs, values and aspirations of First Nations and Métis peoples.

The Action Plan Themes

The Commission's recommendations cover a broad range of issues that affect Aboriginal peoples and communities. This Action Plan has grouped the recommendations into the following themes:

- Dealing with the underlying causes of crime.
- Increasing the involvement of Aboriginal citizens and organizations in justice processes.
- Using alternatives to court and incarceration where appropriate, and increasing the use of restorative approaches.
- Improving justice system responses.

Government's Commitment

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to working with First Nations and Métis communities, the federal government, community organizations and municipalities to ensure that Saskatchewan remains an ideal place to live, work and raise a family.

Seven of the Commission's recommendations are directed to other organizations. Of the 97 recommendations directed to the Government of Saskatchewan, the Province agrees with 66 and agrees in principle with 19 more. There are 12 recommendations where the Province does not agree; primarily related to establishing an Office of the Implementation Commissioner. While we strongly agree there must be mechanisms to ensure the Commission's recommendations are implemented over the next several years, we have chosen to focus our resources on practical reforms and new initiatives, rather than supporting a new administrative structure to oversee the process of implementation.

A number of provincial government departments have directed significant funding to a broad range of initiatives in 2005-2006 that respond to the Commission's recommendations.

For the 2005-2006 fiscal year, more than $48 million in new funding will be invested in responding to the recommendations. While some of this new funding is directed to new initiatives, some will be directed to enhancing or expanding existing programs. A number of the initiatives outlined in the Action Plan are

targeted specifically to First Nations and Métis peoples, while others, though not targeted, will have a significant positive impact on Aboriginal people.

The funding is allocated to the Departments of Health (approximately $3 million), Community Resources and Employment (more than $33 million), Learning (nearly $5 million), Justice (nearly $2.6 million), and Corrections and Public Safety (about $4.4 million).

Reporting on Progress

This Action Plan reflects the initiatives planned by the Government of Saskatchewan for 2005-2006. We recognize that our work will not be done in one year. The Action Plan is a three year strategy that maps out comprehensive, long-term initiatives to help meet the needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities for years to come. We intend to provide regular progress reports over the next three years.

We will measure progress on the basis of outcomes:

- Healthy living.
- Equitable educational opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- Employment opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- Leadership in First Nations and Métis communities.
- Improved Aboriginal confidence in the justice system.
- Improved living standards for First Nations and Métis peoples.
- Greater social and economic opportunities for First Nations and Métis peoples.
- Reduced contact with the justice system for First Nations and Métis peoples.
- Reduced levels of incarceration for First Nations and Métis peoples.

Implementing the Action Plan

There are currently two Implementation Tables that will provide guidance about implementing the recommendations. One is a partnership of the Government of Saskatchewan, the Government of Canada, and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN). The other Implementation Table involves the federal and provincial governments and Métis Family and Community Justice Services Inc. (MFCJS).

The Implementation Table partners will develop responses that draw on their shared resources and knowledge. The Implementation Tables will set priorities for dealing with the Commission's recommendations and will develop a work plan to address them. They will also invite community representatives to participate in discussing and developing specific responses to recommendations.

The involvement of the federal government, provincial government and justice agencies is necessary because these organizations have legislated mandates to perform certain roles in the justice system, and because the Commission directed the majority of its recommendations

to them. Involving the FSIN and MFCJS is important because several Commission recommendations were directed to those organizations and because both have an important role in representing First Nations and Métis peoples.

A Provincial Steering Committee will develop an accountability plan and performance measures for provincial activities; develop, oversee and monitor new initiatives; and determine connections with existing programs and strategies. The Provincial Steering Committee includes Saskatchewan Justice; Corrections and Public Safety; Community Resources and Employment; Culture, Youth and Recreation; Executive Council; Finance; First Nations and Métis Relations; Health; Learning; and Northern Affairs.

Integration of Services

The need to integrate services is one of the key messages in the Commission's reports. In the interim report entitled "Working Together", the Commission discussed the difficulties clients encounter when trying to access services from so many different agencies, departments and levels of government. The Commission emphasized that services should focus on developing a plan to meet the client's needs, be accessible in local communities, and be delivered cooperatively in a coordinated way.

This Action Plan promotes service integration. Government departments have experience with creating these links through initiatives such as School^{PLUS} and KidsFirst. The Implementation Tables and the Provincial Steering Committee will identify ways for departments to work with other agencies to enhance, develop or implement programs.

The Action Plan – The Plan to Deal with the Underlying Causes of Crime

Poverty, inadequate housing, limited education, and alcohol and drug abuse can contribute to crime and victimization. This section of the Action Plan contains initiatives to address these underlying issues, in partnership with First Nations and Métis individuals, communities and organizations. Through the initiatives under this theme, we emphasize the need for all Aboriginal peoples to have healthy physical, emotional and social lives, and equal education and employment opportunities.

Addressing Racism

Chapter 7 of the Commission's final report is a discussion of the need to address racism in our province.

To eliminate racism and encourage mutual understanding and respect, the government will fund public education about Treaty issues and encourage racial harmony. A directory of First Nations and Métis cultural awareness trainers will be developed.

Saskatchewan Learning promotes education about Aboriginal people throughout the school system. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will continue to co-lead a committee with First Nations and Métis Relations to promote public education about a representative workforce. Through the Indian and Métis Education Development program, Saskatchewan Learning will continue to develop resources focused on Aboriginal education.

First Nations and Métis Relations has provided funding to the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) to increase awareness about Treaty issues and racial harmony through public education. The OTC has a highly respected public education program that includes Treaty resource kits for classrooms and providing speakers. Presentations have been given to more than 40,000 people at more than 800 events.

First Nations and Métis Relations will work with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Métis Family and Community Justice Services, and others to develop a directory of First Nations and Métis people who are respected as trainers on cultural awareness (recommendation 7.2). This directory will be updated regularly and posted on the department's website.

Through 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice and First Nations and Métis Relations will work with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the federal government to develop an action plan to address racism (recommendations 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7).

Developing Leadership

The Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform noted the need for, and importance of, leadership training and development for First Nations and Métis peoples (recommendation 1.4).

Government currently offers leadership training through the Aboriginal Participation Initiative (API), introduced by Saskatchewan Culture, Youth and Recreation. This initiative provides sport, culture and recreation programs and services for Aboriginal children and youth that

Developing leadership skills among First Nations and Métis peoples, especially young people, will help build stronger communities for the future. The Building Tomorrow's Leaders Youth Program funds projects to provide Aboriginal youth with leadership.

foster well-being through participation and physical activity, builds youth leadership and volunteer development, promotes cultural heritage, involves the community in planning and decision-making, and includes northern, urban and provincial components.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Relations will establish the Building Tomorrow's Leaders Youth Program. The program will fund Aboriginal organizations, Tribal Councils and schools with significant number of Aboriginal students to hold activities that increase youth leadership and participation in civic, social and community institutions.

Alcohol and Drug Services

Substance abuse is a serious problem that affects Aboriginal individuals, families and communities and often leads to involvement with the criminal justice system.

Through the recent appointment of Mr. Graham Addley as legislative secretary for the review on substance abuse and prevention, the government is reviewing its alcohol and drug addiction policies and programs.

The 2005-2006 budget includes funding to Saskatchewan Health for a provincial Alcohol and Drug Strategy. The Strategy will focus on youth, Aboriginal people, people who have no fixed residence, and northern residents. New initiatives to combat the use of Crystal Meth are part of this comprehensive strategy.

Additional services will offer a safe place where young people can withdraw from alcohol and drugs and stabilize physically, emotionally and socially. More brief detoxification services will provide for short-term stays for people to stabilize from serious drug abuse (recommendation 5.7, 5.8). Mobile treatment operations will be created to meet the needs of northern communities, and community outreach centres will help street youth and families with children who have serious substance abuse issues.

The provincial Alcohol and Drug Strategy will target youth, Aboriginal people, street people and northern residents to help them recover from serious drug abuse problems. Initiatives to combat the use of Crystal Meth are important components of the strategy.

The Strategic Plan for Crystal Meth and Other Amphetamines in Saskatchewan identifies four key areas: prevention; treatment; education; and reducing supply. It outlines 25 key actions for each of these four areas.

Cognitive Disabilities, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

In 2005-2006, the government will continue to implement initiatives for citizens with cognitive disabilities. Funding for 2005-2006 will support a range of new initiatives that will better meet the needs of children and youth with cognitive disabilities, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention, diagnosis and assessment and support services will be increased for individuals and families.

disorder (FASD), so that they remain with their family, succeed at school, find work, and stay employed.

The new initiatives for 2005-2006 are directly linked to existing initiatives – KidsFirst, Building Independence and School^{PLUS}. The funding for 2005-2006 extends supports to families and children in four communities with the highest number of children and youth with cognitive disabilities. This includes direct supports, diagnosis and assessment, and prevention and early intervention (recommendation 2.1).

Child and Youth Mental Health Services

Saskatchewan Health is currently conducting a province-wide consultation to develop a comprehensive plan to improve child and youth mental health services. The consultation is to be completed by August 2005 (recommendation 8.2).

Education for Aboriginal Children and Youth

Saskatchewan Learning has undertaken a number of initiatives to support schools to meet the needs of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal content and perspectives are included in all curricula for all grade levels.

The Community Schools program is a significant program for Aboriginal children and families living off reserve. In 2004-2005, about 36,000 students and their families, half of whom are Aboriginal, benefited from the 98 Community Schools programs across the province. Community Schools offer nutrition programs that respond to recommendation 3.3.

The pre-kindergarten program is an early intervention initiative offered in Community Schools. Pre-kindergarten programs support language and speech development and foster respect for all cultures (recommendation 2.8). In 2004-2005, Saskatchewan Learning supported 100 pre-kindergarten programs, serving about 1,500 vulnerable children and their families.

The Commission endorsed School^{PLUS} as an important program for Aboriginal children and families and recommended expanding it (recommendation 8.5). School^{PLUS} is about using the resources we have to meet the needs of children, youth and their families, and empowering schools and communities to work together. The Integrated School-Linked Services Strategy of School^{PLUS} brings together school divisions, health regions and other human services to pool resources and establish comprehensive plans for delivering services in an integrated manner.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will continue supporting the implementation of School^{PLUS} with funding through the Foundation Operating Grant. The department will also work on advancing the implementation of School^{PLUS} province-wide. One way this will occur is

Further integration and linkages between schools and community service agencies will create conditions where all children and youth have opportunities for learning and healthy development.

The development of shared educational standards between provincial and First Nations schools will support smoother transitions for students who move between First Nations schools and provincial schools.

through the Indicators framework, which includes indicators related to education and well-being outcomes for young Aboriginal people. This will provide the provincial education system with information about improving programs for Aboriginal youth. The initial Indicators Report is scheduled to be released in 2005-2006.

A key component of School^{Plus} is the Student Data System (SDS), launched in October 2004. SDS is a tool to identify young people not attending school and develop initiatives to improve attendance (recommendation 8.4). All students in grades 10 to 12 in provincial schools; 95 per cent of kindergarten to grade 9 students in provincial schools; 80 per cent of First Nations school's students, and youth in educational programs such as Orcadia Youth Custody Residence (Yorkton), Kilburn Hall Youth Facility (Saskatoon) and Musqua School (Saskatoon) are included in the registry.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will work with the FSIN to ensure First Nations schools and provincial schools share educational standards. This will support a smooth transition for Aboriginal students who move between First Nations school systems and the provincial educational system (recommendation 8.3, 8.6).

Post-Secondary Education, Career Training and Employment

The Post-Secondary Sector Aboriginal Education and Training Action Plan addresses the challenges Aboriginal people face in accessing, participating and being successful in post-secondary education, training and employment.

The Multiparty Training Plan III and the Forestry Training Strategy are partnerships that plan, fund and deliver training in the mining and forestry sectors. Approximately 600 people will participate in these initiatives in 2005-2006, 75 per cent of whom will be Aboriginal.

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission will continue to increase Aboriginal participation and success in apprenticeship. Since 2000-2001, the participation of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan's apprenticeship system has increased from 5.8 per cent to 12.8 per cent.

To enable young people to acquire the skills they need in tomorrow's job market, 1,000 new training opportunities will be provided under Career Start.

The Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP) involves employers, unions, educational institutions and government departments in breaking down barriers to the employment of Aboriginal people. As of March 2005, more than 60 partnership agreements have been signed, more than 1,900 Aboriginal people have been hired, and more than 8,500 senior managers, supervisors and employees have received Aboriginal cultural awareness training.

Aboriginal post-secondary students will have greater opportunity to further their education and career training through programs such as the Aboriginal Bursary Program, Gradworks, the University of Saskatchewan Math and Science Enrichment Program, and the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Program.

In 2005-2006, Government will expand partnerships with elementary schools and high school, as well as build on partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.

In 2005-2006, 1,000 new training opportunities will be funded under Career Start. This includes expansion to:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) and literacy, which provides adults who have not completed high school the opportunity to upgrade their academic skills and develop employment and skills. More than 9,000 individuals participate in these programs annually. Almost 60 per cent of the participants are Aboriginal.
- The Provincial Training Allowance, which provides income support to low-income adults enrolled in approved adult training organizations.
- The Jobs Start/Future Skills Program, which links training to employment. The program provides a range of skills training solutions for Saskatchewan people.
- Apprenticeship Training Allowance.

Beginning in 2005-2006, the Aboriginal Bursary Program will provide bursaries to 34 Aboriginal students each year. Students enrolled in the First Nations University of Canada or the University of Regina will receive bursaries of $2,500 per semester to assist them with their post-secondary education.

In 2005-2006, 85 post-secondary graduates will be offered internships in Saskatchewan's Crown corporations. Gradworks will hire 250 interns over five years.

Beginning in the fall of 2005, the University of Saskatchewan Math and Science Enrichment Program for Aboriginal Students will provide an important bridge to careers that require a background in mathematics and science, providing a supportive learning environment for up to 50 Aboriginal students each year.

Educational Programs for Youth in Conflict with the Law

There are a number of initiatives to provide education and employment skills to youth who are in conflict with the law (recommendation 6.24). Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety is working to address the need for sustainable funding to existing employment programs for youth in the correctional system, and is developing additional employment programs for youth and young adults in areas that are not currently receiving this type of service. Community Training Residences have been quite successful in obtaining and maintaining employment for residents. In Saskatoon, the Community Training Residence and probation office have worked together to obtain employment for individuals on probation, who do not reside in a Community Training Residence.

Creating strong connections between youth correctional facilities and schools is the purpose of the Education of Youth in Custody program. This program will help ensure young people are successful in learning once they are released from custody and return to school.

Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety continues to work with other sectors to develop and enhance reintegration support for offenders. For 2005-2006, the Education of Youth in Custody program will provide funding to school divisions to develop links with correctional facilities to improve the transition for youth moving between custody facilities and school, and to improve success in learning while the youth is in custody.

Housing and Income Support

The 2005-2006 budget includes funding to increase the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan's adult basic allowance. This increase will benefit 24,000 individuals on social assistance.

Social programs are significantly enhanced and will continue to help those who need it most.

Shelter rates will be raised for families with children in Regina, Saskatoon, and Lloydminster to a level that is more consistent with rates for other communities in the province.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, designed to strengthen work incentives for low-income families by assisting them with child-related costs of going to work, will be enhanced to ensure that benefits are not reduced by inflation.

Adequate, affordable housing is important for families in all communities across the province. This year, 600 new affordable housing units will be added, with a total of 2,000 new housing units by 2008.

A program to repair and renovate housing units will increase the quality of up to 700 homes this year, and 3,000 affordable homes by 2008.

Safe, affordable housing is a important part of nurturing a healthy family. This year, 600 new housing units will be added, and up to 700 homes will be renovated, for low-income families. The new Rental Housing Supplement will help up to 10,000 low-income families, and up to 3,000 households of people with disabilities, find adequate housing.

The Saskatchewan government is the first in Canada to offer low-income families and people with disabilities a Rental Housing Supplement to help them find affordable housing that meets health and safety standards. The program is expected to help up to 10,000 low-income families and up to 3,000 households of individuals with disabilities.

Providing Services for Children and Families

The Commission devoted one chapter in the Final Report and one interim report to the needs of children and youth. Government strongly agrees that our children deserve the best possible start in life.

Saskatchewan Community Resources and Employment has been working with First Nations to address the recommendations of

the Baby Andy review of July 2003. A number of activities in response to this review have been completed or are underway.

KidsFirst is a primary prevention program managed by Saskatchewan Health, Learning and Community Resources and Employment that helps families become the best parents they can be and have the healthiest children possible. All of the services offered by KidsFirst are aimed at strengthening the family's ability to care for their own children. The program is currently offered in nine Saskatchewan communities, and about 90 per cent of the families are First Nations and Métis. In 2005-2006, new funding will provide home visiting services to more than 200 additional families.

This year, 200 more families will receive service through KidsFirst home visiting program. Quality child care helps children get a good start in life. This year, 500 new child care spaces will be created and families with children with special needs will no longer wait for child care.

Community Resources and Employment, in partnership with Saskatchewan Learning, is developing an Early Learning and Child Care system that will help our youngest children get a good start in life. First steps include creation of 500 new child care spaces in 2005-2006, with the help of funding from the federal government. Funding for 2005-2006 will ensure that families of children with a high level of special needs will no longer wait for child care. Child care subsidies will increase to help support parents who want to continue working or attending school.

Community Resources and Employment is working with First Nations and Métis groups to develop policy and possibly legislation to support custom adoption. Custom adoption is an Aboriginal tradition and is a form of adoption that provides community and birth family involvement.

Community Resources and Employment is developing supports for kinship care arrangements in which children who have been deemed to be in need of protection will be placed with extended family or others who have a significant interest. The kinship care approach is well received by First Nations and Métis people. Discussions with First Nations are underway to ensure all aspects of the approach have been considered.

These initiatives respond to Commission recommendation 8.9.

Preventing Crime

In response to local concerns about high crime rates, Government is working with municipal officials, Aboriginal groups, community organizations and other local government representatives to reduce crime and provide programs that reduce re-offending (recommendation 2.5). Aboriginal agencies in each community play an important role in these programs. Elements include public education, early intervention, coordinated supervision between police and youth workers or probation officers, intensive case management for high-

Targeted, integrated crime reduction strategies will be implemented in Meadow Lake and Prince Albert to reduce offending in these communities.

risk offenders and rehabilitative programming. Strategies are based on practices shown by research to work.

The Regina Auto Theft Strategy is an integrated approach involving the Regina Police Service, Public Prosecutions, Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety and Saskatchewan Government Insurance. Since the implementation of this strategy, there was a 28 per cent reduction in auto thefts in 2002, and an additional 5.9 per cent reduction in 2003. A similar strategy was implemented in 2004 to deal with break and enters in Saskatoon. The North Battleford Crime Reduction Strategy was implemented in 2003 to focus on supervising repeat offenders, early intervention for low-risk offenders, and a program that works with children under the age of 12 who are involved in criminal behaviour. In 2005-2006, similar programs will be implemented in Meadow Lake and Prince Albert. In addition, Government will establish a targeted crime reduction initiative in a selected northern community (recommendations 2.5, 6.10, 6.15 and 6.24).

Saskatchewan Justice currently supports crime prevention programs in urban communities. Recognizing there is a need for similar programs in northern Saskatchewan, beginning in 2005-2006, Government will provide funding to the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities (SANC) Inc. to develop targeted crime prevention strategies for northern communities (recommendation 2.5).

In 2005-2006, Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will work with the federal government, First Nations, Métis organizations and others to develop a provincial crime prevention strategy (recommendation 2.4). Research indicates that the most effective crime prevention programs are multi-faceted. The strategy will consider programs to reduce victimization and re-offending, and targeted crime reduction initiatives.

The Action Plan – The Plan to Increase the Involvement of Aboriginal Citizens and Groups in Justice Processes

An important objective of this Action Plan is to make the justice system more responsive to and accepting of the traditions, cultures and circumstances of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan. Our justice system can only work if people trust it and believe that it serves their needs. One of the most important ways to improve our justice system is to ensure the involvement of First Nations and Métis peoples in all aspects of the process.

Policing

To fulfill the Police Promise and respond to the Commission (recommendations 5.1 and 5.3) and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Death of Neil Stonechild, Government will support 49 new police positions over three years, with a focus on recruiting Aboriginal officers for these positions.

18 new police positions will be added in 2005-2006, with a focus on recruiting Aboriginal officers. A recruitment strategy will look at ways to attract Aboriginal candidates, and help Aboriginal recruits achieve career success.

Over the next three years, five new agreements will be developed to provide Aboriginal policing on reserves. This will bring to 36 the number of such agreements.

In 2005-2006, Government will provide funding for 18 new police positions. The funding includes 11 positions for the RCMP – nine policing positions for northern communities, one position to develop an Aboriginal recruitment strategy and one to support the RCMP Cadet program. Saskatchewan Justice will work with municipal police services to ensure their participation in development of the recruitment strategy. The recruitment strategy will look at ways to attract Aboriginal candidates into policing and ensure Aboriginal recruits are provided with the necessary supports to achieve career success.

The Government will develop five new Community Tripartite Agreements (CTAs) over three years. These agreements are between First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan to provide policing on reserves. Currently there are 31 CTAs with 45 First Nations that cover about 78 per cent of the on-reserve population of Saskatchewan. The File Hills Police Service is in the process of becoming the province's first self-administered First Nations police service. The Province is interested in exploring options for further development of self-administered policing services.

Police management boards operate in First Nations communities that have CTAs. The boards are responsible for helping the police decide what type of policing service is provided in the area. Community police boards have similar responsibilities. They were developed under a 1999 agreement between northern communities, the RCMP, and Saskatchewan Justice. In 2005-2006, Justice will provide additional training and support to police management boards and community police boards (recommendations 5.3 and 5.5).

An Aboriginal Provincial Court Party, including a translator, will be established in Meadow Lake to travel to and serve communities in northwestern Saskatchewan.

Cree and Dene speaking Justices of the Peace will be appointed in two northern communities.

People serving on juries will receive increased fees for jury duty and increased travel rates.

The Courts

Recommendations 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.5 speak to increasing the involvement of Aboriginal people and communities in court processes. It is important that Aboriginal people believe they are treated fairly and that they understand the roles and responsibilities of those involved.

In 2001, the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan began providing services in Cree eight days a month, at four court sites in its Cree Court circuit. The judge, prosecutor, and court clerk all speak Cree.

Dene translation services are currently available at court points served from La Ronge. Cree and Dene translation services are also available in Prince Albert and at court points served from Prince Albert.

In 2005-2006, an Aboriginal Provincial Court Party will be established in Meadow Lake. The Aboriginal Court Party, which will travel to a number of court points in northwestern Saskatchewan, will include a full-time translator. Other translation services will also be improved in the North, beginning with the recruitment of a Dene translator in the Meadow Lake Provincial Court office (recommendation 6.3).

In 2005-2006, two Justices of the Peace will be appointed in northern communities – one to a Cree-speaking community and one to a Dene-speaking community. Cree and Dene-speaking people will be recruited for these appointments. Justices of the Peace are citizens appointed by Order-in-Council to perform specific administrative and judicial functions of the Provincial Court.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will begin implementing initiatives to support the participation of Aboriginal people on juries such as increasing the fees paid for jury duty and providing increased resources for transportation and mileage to court for potential jurors, where necessary (recommendation 6.1).

Saskatchewan Justice will consult with the Provincial Court and Aboriginal communities about installing appropriate cultural symbols in the Meadow Lake and La Ronge Provincial Court buildings.

The Government will establish Provincial Court points in additional First Nations and Métis communities where warranted by workload and geographic accessibility, and where there are suitable court facilities available.

Program and Policy Development

In 2004-2005, Justice and Corrections and Public Safety established the Traditional Elders Ministerial Advisory Committee.

Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to support the FSIN in policy development work on tribal policing, community justice, and corrections. We will also continue to fund programs such as the FSIN's

Special Investigations Unit, which has been reviewing complaints against the police and other agencies, and referring complaints to the appropriate organization for investigation. Government has funded this unit since 2001-2002.

The Implementation Tables will continue to provide important venues for participation of First Nations and Métis peoples.

Employing More First Nations and Métis Peoples in the Criminal Justice System

The Commission emphasized the need for more Aboriginal people to work throughout the criminal justice system as judges (recommendation 6.6), Legal Aid lawyers and articling students (recommendation 6.19), and police officers (recommendation 5.3).

In 2004-2005, 7.5 per cent of Saskatchewan Justice employees and 15 per cent of Corrections and Public Safety employees identified themselves as Aboriginal persons. The Saskatchewan Justice goal for 2005-2006 is to increase the percentage of Aboriginal employees to 9.5 per cent of the department's workforce. Corrections and Public Safety will focus on increasing the number of Aboriginal people employed in management and professional positions.

Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to recruit Aboriginal employees and implement employment diversity policies to increase the number of Aboriginal employees, particularly in management and professional positions. The departments will also work with post-secondary institutions and professional organizations to promote careers in the justice system and recruit more Aboriginal Legal Aid staff, lawyers, police officers and correctional workers.

Community-based Aboriginal justice programs, funded through Saskatchewan Justice, employ 97 Aboriginal people who provide culturally sensitive justice services. Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to encourage Aboriginal employment in the justice field through partnerships with community-based Aboriginal organizations.

The provincial government is committed to a Provincial Court that is representative of Saskatchewan communities. As more Aboriginal people enter the legal profession, opportunities will arise for the appointment of more First Nations and Métis judges. The province will encourage the federal government to adopt a similar position with respect to appointments to the Court of Queen's Bench and Court of Appeal (recommendation 6.6).

The Action Plan – The Plan to Use Alternatives to Court and Incarceration

Government is committed to working with First Nations and Métis individuals and organizations to assist victims and offenders, and promote healing in Aboriginal communities to help break the cycle of violence and abuse. This aspect of the Action Plan focuses on expanding victim's services, addressing violence and abuse, and developing therapeutic courts and alternative responses to crime.

Expanding Victims Services in the North

The Commission recognized and endorsed the value of victims' services programs, and called for these programs to be expanded (recommendation 3.12). Victims' services programs provide emotional support, information and practical assistance to victims of crime throughout the criminal justice process.

Victims services programs will be established in Stony Rapids and Black Lake.

A victim and witness coordinator will be hired in La Ronge to help victims and witnesses deal with the trauma of their experience and prepare for court.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will establish a police-affiliated victims' services program in northern Saskatchewan to serve Stony Rapids and Black Lake. We will also establish a victim/witness coordinator position in La Ronge, to serve children and other vulnerable victims and witnesses in northern Saskatchewan.

Addressing Violence and Abuse Through Integrated Programs

Chapter 3 of the Commission's Final Report contains eight recommendations about domestic violence (3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, and 3.13). While strongly agreeing with the importance of addressing domestic violence, Saskatchewan focuses on the wider issue of violence and abuse in relationships ranging from families and intimate relationships to community settings such as schools and workplaces.

Domestic violence is a serious issue among Aboriginal families. Saskatoon will see the creation of a Domestic Violence Court this year. Justice will develop a community safety plan for dealing with family and interpersonal violence in one or more northern communities.

Corrections and Public Safety has established a family violence program at White Bear First Nation where a band member provides probation services and family violence programming. Corrections and Public Safety is extending the contract for File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council to provide probation services, and the In Search of Your Warrior Program which focuses on responding to domestic violence.

Government is working to address family and interpersonal violence through programs funded by the departments of Health, Justice, Community Resources and Employment, Learning, and Corrections and Public Safety, and government's partnership with Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnership Solutions to Violence (STOPS). STOPS will receive funding in 2005-2006 to create a template that will assist

communities in developing local plans to respond to violence and abuse.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will target communities with a high incidence of personal and family violence in approaches that integrate mental health services, victims' services, corrections programming, the police, counseling, and court-related justice services. Funding is being provided to enable the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court in North Battleford to enhance counseling, provide child counseling, and offer prevention information. Justice is providing funding to support a coordinator position in Saskatoon to implement a specialized Domestic Violence Court. Justice will develop a community safety plan for dealing with family and interpersonal violence in one or more northern communities.

Saskatchewan Justice is currently evaluating its eight Aboriginal family violence programs, the North Battleford Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court, and the police-affiliated Victims Services and Aboriginal Resource Officer programs (recommendation 3.13). The evaluation of the effectiveness of the Aboriginal family violence programs will be completed in 2005-2006.

Expanding Alternative Measures and Community Justice Programs

The Commission recommended that more community justice programs be established in Saskatchewan (recommendation 6.10). Saskatchewan is one of the highest users in Canada of alternative measures as a response to youth and adult offending. We support community-based agencies, many of which are operated by Aboriginal governments or organizations that work with alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions (criminal cases referred by the police to a community-based agency with the approval of the Crown prosecutor, under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*). These agencies receive approximately 6,000 referrals each year for adult alternative measures and youth extrajudicial sanctions. Since the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA), more cases are being dealt with early in the justice process. In 2003, there was a 36 per cent increase in police warnings to youth who committed less serious offences. In 2003-2004 and the first three-quarters of 2004-2005 there was also a slight increase in referrals to extrajudicial sanctions.

Alternative measures and community justice programs reduce the number of people appearing before the courts.

A new program in Saskatoon will focus on young people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder who commit break and enters. The program will deal with these young people in ways that are meaningful to them.

The number of adult alternative measures referrals will be increased by about 1,000 this year.

We are strongly committed to the use and development of these programs. We are currently testing models that focus on specific types of offences and offender characteristics, for example the Help Eliminate Auto Theft program in Regina. In 2005-2006, we will support the development of a new extrajudicial sanctions program, which will be operated by the Saskatoon Tribal Council. The program will

focus on break and enters and youth with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will work with Métis communities, First Nations, urban programs, and Tribal Councils to enhance community justice programs, and expand the number of adult alternative measures referrals by approximately 1,000 across the province.

We are working with the RCMP and Regina Police Service to launch a police cautioning program in 2005-2006 that will provide police with a tool to hold youth accountable for matters that are too serious for a verbal warning, but are not serious enough to refer to extrajudicial sanctions (recommendation 6.29).

Introducing a Drug Treatment Court in Regina

The Province is seeking federal funding to implement a therapeutic drug court in 2005-2006, which will focus primarily on young Aboriginal adults (18 to 25 years old) who have drug and alcohol abuse problems and have committed a criminal offence.

A key outcome under this theme is to increase Aboriginal confidence in the fairness of justice processes and in the expectation that all people – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – will be treated with respect by the justice system.

Establishing the New Police Complaints Process

In response to recommendation 5.10 and one of the interim reports, the Province will introduce legislative amendments in 2005 to create a new process for handling all public complaints against municipal police members. The new process includes establishment of an independent Police Complaints Commission. The Commission will include First Nations and Métis people and will have its own investigative staff. The new Commission will have the authority to investigate all allegations involving criminal, statutory and disciplinary matters that involve a member of the public.

A new police public complaints commission, which will include representatives of Aboriginal people and police, will handle all complaints against municipal police members in Saskatchewan.

The new model will include a continued role for the FSIN Special Investigations Unit, which has been doing important work in reviewing complaints against the police and other organizations, referring matters to the appropriate organization for investigation, and supporting people with filing complaints.

Replacing the 1913 Portion of the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre

Work is currently underway to replace the 1913 portion of the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre (RPCC). The project will provide a total of 216 beds, which includes 144 remand beds (including a visitor component), 48 high-security beds, 12 medium-security beds and 12 medical beds. The project will also include a health care unit, an admission/discharge unit with vehicle sally port access, and an administration building. The vehicle sally port access is a secure area for inmate transfer, and the visitor component is a secure area where offenders can receive visitors. The project is scheduled for completion by April 2008.

Replacement of the 1913 portion of the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre is underway and will be completed by 2008.

Video Conferencing

Justice and Corrections and Public Safety are working together to establish a video-link between the Saskatoon Correctional Centre and Saskatoon Provincial Court to reduce the need for prisoner transportation for first appearances.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will implement two videoconferencing projects in northern locations. We will also explore the feasibility of developing videoconferencing with First Nations and Métis communities (recommendation 6.7).

Family Law Services in the North

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will provide northern communities with access to workshops about parenting after separation or divorce. The workshop was developed for Aboriginal peoples and will be provided in an interactive CD format so that it can be delivered in remote locations.

Reducing Violence and the Risk of Re-offending

Research indicates that reducing inmate violence and misbehaviour while in custody will contribute to a reduction in re-offending when the inmate returns to the community.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will implement the first phase of a Violence Reduction Strategy. Goals of the strategy include reducing violent incidents in facilities, decreasing re-offending, and increasing employment and literacy skills. The first phase will focus on adult facilities and will provide staff in correctional centres with additional tools to recognize and manage violent offenders and diffuse volatile situations.

Programs to reduce violent behaviour while in custody, thereby reducing the risk of re-offending, will begin in the province's correctional centres this year.

Providing Reintegration and Cultural and Spiritual Programming

For the past several years, Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety has been placing increased emphasis on developing plans for adult and youth offenders to successfully reintegrate into their communities (recommendations 6.15 and 6.28), increasing access to cultural and spiritual programming (recommendation 6.23), and operating programs designed to aid offenders with the transition to the community (recommendation 6.24). Reintegration agreements are currently in place with several First Nations communities to guide an offender's transition from a correctional facility back to the home community.

Cultural programming in correctional facilities will be enhanced to help offenders, especially youth, reconnect with their heritage in a positive way, and ease the transition from custody to their home community.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will enhance reintegration and cultural programming by developing new youth reintegration programs in consultation with First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations; and staffing an Aboriginal Liaison Manager position in Corrections and Public Safety to work on policy and program issues with the FSIN and other Aboriginal organizations.

Reducing the Use of Remand and Systems Charges

The Province strongly supports efforts to reduce the reliance on incarceration in response to recommendations 6.8, 6.14 and 6.32.

The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Courtworker Program helps accused persons going through the criminal justice system. The Courtworker

program is designed to meet the unique needs of Aboriginal people; however, all accused people may ask for the services and support of a Courtworker. There are 31 full and part-time Courtworkers in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety is developing a remand strategy for 2005-2006. The goal is to reduce the number of offenders remanded due to systems offences. Systems offences include bail violation, failure to appear in court or escaping custody.

Bail programs and supervision and probation services will be enhanced to reduce the number of people remanded into custody while awaiting trial.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will increase resources for judicial interim release programs (also known as bail), to enable people to remain in their communities with adequate supervision and support while they await trial. This will reduce the number of people who are remanded into custody before their hearing (recommendation 6.33). Corrections and Public Safety will also offer expanded hours for probation officers in areas where targeted crime reduction initiatives are located.

Modernizing the Coroner's Program

Saskatchewan's coroner's program will undergo significant development beginning in 2005-2006 with recruitment of a forensic pathologist.

In response to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Death of Neil Stonechild, Saskatchewan's coroner's system will undergo significant growth and development over the next three years. In 2005-2006, Government will provide funding for new training initiatives for community coroners, as well as establishing and recruiting a provincial forensic pathologist. Over the next two years, we will increase forensic pathology services, enhance support for community coroners and establish regional offices in Saskatoon and Regina.

This Action Plan reflects the initiatives planned by the Government of Saskatchewan for 2005-2006. We recognize that our work will not be done in one year. The Action Plan is a three year strategy that maps out comprehensive, long-term initiatives to help meet the needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities for years to come.

Our Action Plan is an important step toward addressing the social, economic and justice issues affecting Aboriginal people in our province, as we begin our second century. Improving the lives of First Nations and Métis peoples requires the commitment, participation and willingness of all partners. We look forward to working together for many years to achieve our goal of creating a healthy, just, prosperous and safe province for all Saskatchewan people.

As we begin our province's second century, we acknowledge the achievements of First Nations and Métis peoples, and we are committed to working with our partners to continue along the path of creating a healthy, just, prosperous and safe Saskatchewan for all.

Seven of the Commission's recommendations are directed to other organizations. Of the 97 recommendations directed to the Government of Saskatchewan, the Province agrees with 66 and agrees in principle with 19 more. There are 12 recommendations where the Province does not agree.

EMPOWERING FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS LEADERSHIP

1.1 "... the Office of the Treaty Commissioner's mandate be continued beyond 2005, and that the Government of Canada, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Office of the Treaty Commissioner, with an expanded mandate, accelerate their discussions concerning treaty-based governance and take into account recommendations of this Commission in concluding agreements as quickly as possible."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) has been doing important work on treaty-based governance and public education about treaties and First Nations people. First Nations and Métis Relations has provided funding to the OTC to raise cultural awareness and awareness about treaty issues. The province will continue to participate in self-government negotiations that build on the treaty relationships between Canada and First Nations.

1.2 "... the Government of Canada and the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan establish a Nation-to-Nation dialogue aimed at establishing appropriate governance structures for the Métis people that will address justice issues, as well as other aspirations and needs of the Métis people."

Saskatchewan agrees. As Canada has the primary responsibility for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, it is appropriate for the federal government to enter into dialogue on a nation-to-nation basis with Métis people.

1.3 "... the Government of Saskatchewan also participate in these discussions as an observer."

Saskatchewan is unable to respond at this time as the Province does not currently have a relationship with Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, pending the outcome of the dialogue within the Métis community on electoral process. If the relationship is re-established, the Province would welcome an opportunity to participate in these discussions.

1.4.1 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan establish First Nations and Métis Leadership Development Funds to promote leadership training for First Nations and Métis people."

1.4.2 "... an Institute on Traditional Law and Governance be established by 2007, to provide training to First Nations and Métis professionals and leaders in Saskatchewan."

Saskatchewan agrees that providing training for First Nations and Métis professionals and leaders promotes leadership within the community.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Relations will establish the Building Tomorrow's Leaders Youth Program. The program will fund Aboriginal organizations, Tribal Councils and schools with significant number of Aboriginal students to hold activities that increase youth leadership and participation in civic, social and community institutions.

First Nations and Métis community leaders have suggested that programs be developed within existing First Nations and Métis institutions, rather than creating new entities. The Implementation Tables will explore options for promoting leadership.

1.5 "... post-secondary educational institutions and professional associations work together to develop plans that will ensure that professionals already in the field have access to programs of continuing professional education that emphasize cultural issues associated with the provision of justice services."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Learning and First Nations and Métis Relations will work with other partners to develop continuing education programs for justice professionals that emphasize culturally appropriate services.

1.6 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, justice and health authorities, and traditional practitioners co-operate to protect and extend traditional justice and healing practices, and explore their application to contemporary First Nations and Métis community concerns."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. This issue will be referred to the Implementation Tables.

CREATING HEALTHY, JUST, PROSPEROUS AND SAFE COMMUNITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

2.1.1 "... the Government of Saskatchewan finance a long-term targeted fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) strategy that includes prevention, intervention and follow up to address the life-long disabilities caused by alcohol use and abuse."

2.1.2 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan collaborate on a fetal alcohol spectrum disorders awareness-training program that will be delivered to all people who work with children and youth and their families, including the police, to create a level of awareness."

2.1.3 "... the Saskatchewan Police College deliver a fetal alcohol spectrum disorders training module to all new recruits to provide an understanding of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders."

2.1.4 "... the Government of Saskatchewan, primarily child welfare and health authorities, review the legislation and policy as it relates to the provision of

services to people with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders to ensure that they are not excluded by virtue of their IQ and to ensure that support services are provided to families, in the absence of protection concerns."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, the Government will continue implementation of initiatives for citizens with cognitive disabilities. Funding for 2005-2006 will support a range of new initiatives that will better meet the needs of children and youth with cognitive disabilities, including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), so that they remain with their family, succeed at school, find work, and stay employed.

The initiatives for 2005-2006 are directly linked to existing initiatives – KidsFirst, Building Independence and School[new]. The funding for 2005-2006 extends supports to families and children in four communities with the highest number of children and youth with cognitive disabilities. This includes direct supports, diagnosis and assessment, and prevention and early intervention.

In 2005-2006, training on FASD will be added to the curriculum of the Saskatchewan Police College.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will support the development of a new extrajudicial sanctions program, which will be operated by the Saskatoon Tribal Council. The program will focus on break and enters and youth with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

Saskatchewan's child welfare legislation and policy does not exclude people with FASD from programs or services. The cognitive disabilities plan puts assessment of individual needs ahead of diagnosis and I.Q., reducing the possibility that individuals would be denied services on that basis. Support services will be directed to addressing specific needs, rather than being tied to a specific disorder or an individual's I.Q.

2.2 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan streamline the funding process for crime prevention interventions in consultation with communities, and provide core-funding arrangements to programs that have proven successful."

Saskatchewan agrees. Government will continue to seek long-term funding arrangements with the federal government for crime prevention programs.

2.3 "... the Government of Canada, in consultation with other orders of government, develop Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Peoples Social and Economic Policy Plans focused on improving quality of life for First Nations and Métis people. Further, that the Implementation Office be responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress. The plans must develop policy, through taking into consideration the practices and customs of First Nations and Métis people including, but not limited to, the following goals: eliminate poverty; improve educational attainment; increase employment; provide appropriate housing; promote health especially in the areas of

addictions, including fetal alcohol spectrum disorders; transfer of resources to the community; and respond to the realities of urbanization."

Saskatchewan agrees. Through the Implementation Tables, we will work with the federal government to ensure that the plans are sustainable and that they align with existing provincial strategies.

2.4 "...the Government of Saskatchewan, in partnership with First Nations and Métis communities, design a proactive targeted Saskatchewan crime prevention strategy by April 1, 2005."

Saskatchewan agrees. It was not possible to develop a comprehensive strategy by April 1, 2005, because of the number of stakeholders who have a role in crime prevention.

In 2005-2006, Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will work with the federal government, First Nations, Métis organizations and others to develop a provincial crime prevention strategy. Research indicates that the most effective crime prevention programs are multi-faceted. The strategy will consider programs to reduce victimization and re-offending, and targeted crime reduction initiatives.

2.5 "... the Government of Saskatchewan divert funds currently spent on reacting to crime in the criminal justice system, to proactive targeted community based prevention projects."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. We strongly support community-based programs and crime prevention. Diverting funds used to react to crime in the short term would decrease public safety because community-based crime prevention programs require time to reduce crime rates. Instead, Government's provincial crime prevention strategy, to be developed in 2005-2006, will support new targeted crime reduction initiatives and new crime prevention programs in northern Saskatchewan.

In response to lower custody counts, three facilities were closed in the first quarter of 2004-2005. In January 2005, an additional unit was permanently closed. Resources from reduced custody spaces have been redirected to initiatives such as additional young offenders community programming; extrajudicial sanctions programs; reintegration programming delivered by Tribal Councils; targeted crime reduction initiatives; and the addition of 15 community youth workers.

2.6 "... the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada review the funding arrangement with First Nations Child and Family Services agencies to ensure that services to prevent children from coming into care are funded."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. We will continue discussions with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada about services to support families.

2.7 "... all governments increase supports to single parents, including providing adequate social assistance, respite, parenting knowledge and skill development."

Saskatchewan agrees. Government's Building Independence initiative has resulted in greater opportunity for low-income people to escape poverty through employment, and has helped people make the transition from social assistance to work. Since the start of reforms in 1997, families in all circumstances, including social assistance beneficiaries, have become better off as a result of benefits, tax reforms and an improved economy.

The 2005-2006 budget includes funding to increase the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan's adult basic allowance. This increase will benefit 24,000 individuals on social assistance. Shelter rates will be raised for families with children in Regina, Saskatoon, and Lloydminster to a level that is more consistent with rates for other communities in the province. The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, designed to strengthen work incentives for low-income families by assisting them with child-related costs of going to work, will be enhanced to ensure that benefits are not reduced by inflation.

2.8 "... the Government of Saskatchewan facilitates a discussion with youthful parents regarding the concept of parenting centres/co-operatives to provide youthful parents respite, parenting knowledge and skill development."

2.9 "... the Department of Community Resources and Employment engage community and the various government departments and agencies to develop local community plans to strengthen family through provision of culturally relevant, parenting skill training."

Saskatchewan agrees. The pre-kindergarten program is an early intervention initiative offered in Community Schools. Pre-kindergarten programs support language and speech development and foster respect for all cultures. In 2004-2005, Saskatchewan Learning supported 100 pre-kindergarten programs, serving about 1,500 vulnerable children and their families.

The Early Learning and Child Care system will help our youngest children get a good start in life. First steps include creation of 500 new child care spaces in 2005-2006, with the help of funding from the federal government. Funding for 2005-2006 will ensure that families of children with a high level of special needs will no longer wait for child care. Child care subsidies will increase to help support parents who want to continue working or attending school.

2.10 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan build strategies to respond to gangs that includes: education, prevention and intervention, and that information about gangs be provided to parents, schools and communities."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to work with the FSIN, police services, and others to implement effective interventions to help gang members break free from gang affiliations.

VIOLENCE AND VICTIMIZATION

3.1 "... the Government of Saskatchewan, specifically the Minister of Community Resources and Employment review this regulation with a view to increasing the amount of exemption for those on social assistance who receive a settlement from the Government of Canada for abuse suffered during their residential school experience and that the Government of Canada reconsiders their position to a cap on their settlement."

Saskatchewan does not agree. The income exemption in *The Saskatchewan Assistance Regulations* is consistently applied for all victims receiving compensation for pain and suffering. This preserves the role of social assistance as the program of last resort to meet basic needs when all other resources have been exhausted.

3.2 "... the education systems, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and others, support the introduction in kindergarten and Grade 1 of : non-violence alternatives, information about violence in its many forms, the effects of such violence and solutions thereto, including the responsibility shared by all to eliminate violence, and that it be reinforced in subsequent grades."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will support schools and school divisions in addressing this recommendation through health education and the Caring and Respectful Schools initiative.

3.3 "... all schools, with a high number of children who are living in poverty, implement a school nutrition program."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Province supports this recommendation through the 98 Community Schools in urban, rural and northern parts of Saskatchewan, including areas where poverty is greatest. In partnership with families, the local community and local organizations, community schools deliver food services and nutrition education to meet the needs of children, youth and their families. Saskatchewan Learning will continue to identify areas with high levels of poverty and consider expanding the Community Schools program as resources allow.

3.4 "... all governments promote the use of non-violent alternatives to child correction. Steps must be taken to ensure laws, policy and practice comply with the direction provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Community Resources and Employment and Corrections and Public Safety have policies requiring the use of non-violent approaches to child correction for children in care or in custody. Most schools prohibit or limit the use of force in the public school system. Saskatchewan Learning has prepared legislative amendments to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in schools.

Recommendations relating to interpersonal violence and abuse

The Government of Saskatchewan is responding to interpersonal violence and abuse through a number of inter-related initiatives in response to these six recommendations:

3.5 "...there be greater consideration given to delivering domestic violence programs that focus on dealing with partners and families."

3.6 "... all levels of government ensure that family violence programming for men and women is supported and made available."

3.7 "... the Government of Saskatchewan develop public awareness materials related to violence specifically suited for the needs of northern residents. To ensure that material is suited for needs in the North, there must be consultation from northern residents, including young people."

3.9 "... the Government of Saskatchewan or First Nations councils or Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, whichever is appropriate, ensure that transportation is provided to women seeking shelter from violent situations and that adequate funding be provided for their stay."

3.10.1 "... funding from all governments to increase the number of beds for women seeking safety from domestic violence situations;"

3.10.2 "... funders providing resources to shelters ensure sufficient funds for the agencies to provide more training to their staff and more outreach to communities."

3.13 "... the Government of Saskatchewan provide funding to study the effectiveness of domestic violence programming."

Saskatchewan agrees with the importance of addressing domestic violence including the wider issue of violence and abuse in relationships from families and intimate relationships to schools and workplaces.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will:

- provide funding to allow the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court in North Battleford to enhance counseling, provide child counseling, and offer prevention information;
- begin implementation of a therapeutic Domestic Violence Court in Saskatoon by funding a coordinator position; and
- develop a community safety plan for dealing with family and interpersonal violence in one or more northern communities.

Saskatchewan Justice will build on these new initiatives as well as existing programs to develop comprehensive systems of support in communities with a high incidence of personal and family violence. This approach integrates mental health services, victim's services, corrections programming, the police, counseling, and court-related justice services.

Government is also working to address family and interpersonal violence through programs

funded by the departments of Health, Justice, Community Resources and Employment, Learning and Corrections and Public Safety, and government's partnership with Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnership Solutions to Violence (STOPS). STOPS will receive funding in 2005-2006 to create a template that will assist communities in developing local plans to respond to violence and abuse.

Saskatchewan Justice is currently evaluating its eight Aboriginal family violence programs, the North Battleford Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court, and the police-affiliated Victim Services and Aboriginal Resource Officer programs. The evaluation of the Aboriginal family violence programs will be completed in 2005-2006.

Other recommendations regarding victims' services and domestic violence

3.8 "... all levels of government immediately resolve the jurisdiction dispute around the *Victims of Domestic Violence Act* on Indian reserves."

Saskatchewan agrees with this recommendation, which will be discussed at the Implementation Tables in 2005-2006. Saskatchewan was a national leader in passing innovative domestic violence legislation, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Act*. The Act provides emergency intervention orders, victim's assistance orders, and warrants of entry to assist victims of domestic violence. These measures are focused on the needs of victims.

3.11 "... agencies providing shelter services to women and police services meet to find a solution to the issue of sharing information within the parameters of the privacy legislation."

Saskatchewan will not respond, as this recommendation is addressed to shelter agencies and police services.

3.12 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan expand victim services in the province."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, we will launch a new victims services program in northern Saskatchewan to serve the communities of Black Lake and Stony Rapids, and a new victim/witness coordinator position will be established in La Ronge. We invite the federal government to participate in supporting victims services.

3.14 "... further study on the concept and impact of hope, with a view to including hope in programming and assessment."

Saskatchewan agrees. This discussion will be referred to the Implementation Tables.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: RESTORING JUSTICE IN SASKATCHEWAN

4.1 "... every level of government support the education of police, lawyers and judges to recognize mental disorders and disabilities, in order to divert persons with mental disorders and disabilities to appropriate resources."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan is one of the highest users of alternative measures as a response to youth and adult offending. We support community-based agencies that work with alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions (criminal cases referred by the police to a community-based agency with the approval of the Crown prosecutor, under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*). Since 2001-2002, these agencies have received approximately 6,000 referrals each year for adult alternative measures and youth extrajudicial sanctions.

The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Courtworker Program helps accused persons going through the criminal justice system. The Courtworker program is designed to meet the unique needs of Aboriginal people; however, all accused people may ask for the services and support of a Courtworker. There are 31 full and part-time Courtworkers in Saskatchewan.

In 2005-2006, training on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) will be added to the curriculum of the Saskatchewan Police College.

Corrections and Public Safety is currently testing models that focus on specific types of offences and offender characteristics, for example the Help Eliminate Auto Theft program in Regina. In 2005-2006 we will support the development of a new extrajudicial sanctions program, which will be operated by the Saskatoon Tribal Council. The program will focus on break and enters and youth with FASD.

4.2.1 "... funding be allocated by all levels of governments to therapeutic resources, with a First Nations and Métis focus, including: drug addiction, follow up care, and healing initiatives."

4.2.2 "... meaningful sentencing alternatives be developed by Saskatchewan Justice in co-operation with communities and Courts, to allow for intensive therapy involving Elders, healers, and supports for family, and that these sentencing alternatives have a First Nations and Métis focus."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Province will work with the federal and municipal governments, First Nations, Tribal Councils and Métis communities to develop community-based substance abuse and other healing initiatives that meet the unique cultural, spiritual and language needs of Aboriginal offenders. Elders and healers will be involved as well. Saskatchewan Health will support this recommendation through the Alcohol and Drug Strategy, a three-year strategy that will focus on youth, Aboriginal people, and street involved persons who have no fixed residence, and northern residents. The strategy includes enhancing brief detoxification services, outreach centres and counselors, methadone counselors and prevention coordinators, addressing injection drug use, and expanding provincial supports.

In 2005-2006, funding is being provided to enable the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court in North Battleford to enhance counseling, provide child counseling, and offer prevention information. Justice is providing funding to support a coordinator position in Saskatoon to implement a specialized Domestic Violence Court.

The Province is seeking federal funding to implement a therapeutic drug court in 2005-2006, which will focus primarily on young Aboriginal adults.

4.3 "... the Aboriginal Courtworker program be adequately resourced by the Government of Saskatchewan to meet their current mandate and consideration be given to an expanded mandate that will enable courtworkers to incorporate restorative support for those appearing before the Courts."

Saskatchewan agrees that the Aboriginal Courtworker Program should be adequately resourced. The federal and provincial governments have increased the budget for this program over the past two years. The Province will continue to work with the federal government to seek additional enhancements to this program.

Expanding the courtworkers' mandate would result in overlap with the mandate of such agencies as community justice programs. This issue will be referred to the Implementation Tables.

4.4 "... system generated charges be dealt with administratively as follows:

4.4.1 "Youth who are subject to system generated charges and lower level offences be referred to Elder led community based teams to discern and consider ways to meet the needs of youth outside of the Courts."

4.4.2 "Adults who are subject to systems generated charges and lower level offences be referred to community teams to discern and consider ways to meet the needs of the individual restoratively, outside of the courts."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. There is a need to develop different ways to decrease the number of systems offences and to provide support for individuals who are likely to breach conditions resulting in charges. Systems offences include bail violations, failure to appear in court or breach of probation.

The justice system deals with a large number of systems offences in various ways. Probation officers and youth workers recommend charges as a last resort. Police use their discretion not to charge breach offences, and a number of these cases are diverted to alternative measures programs. There is significant consultation between community service providers and justice officials in selecting cases for these programs. Courtworkers refer clients to services that help them to keep the conditions imposed by the Court.

Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety is developing a remand strategy for 2005-2006. The goal is to reduce the number of offenders remanded due to systems offences. Systems offences include bail violation, failure to appear in court or escaping custody.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will increase resources for judicial interim release programs (also known as bail), to enable people to remain in their communities with adequate supervision and support while they await trial.

This will reduce the number of people who are remanded into custody before their hearing. Corrections and Public Safety will also offer expanded hours for probation officers in areas where targeted crime reduction initiatives are located.

POLICING

5.1 "... implementation of a strategy to eliminate racism in policing by the Saskatchewan Police Commission. This strategy shall contain:

5.1.1 "Police recruitment screening strategies specifically to prevent candidates with racist views on ethnic or religious groups from being offered employment.

5.1.2 "A complaints process that requires allegations of racist language or behaviour against individual officers be reported to the officers' immediate supervisor and the chief of police.

5.1.3 "An intensive remedial training program for police officers who exhibit racist attitudes. This program must be successfully completed to the satisfaction of the officer's supervising officer and the program facilitator.

5.1.4 "The tools which would allow the immediate supervisor or chiefs of police to respond immediately to allegations of racism.

5.1.5 "A pro-active First Nation and Métis candidate recruitment strategy.

5.1.6 "Employment assistance counseling for First Nations and Métis candidates that will assist them with the pressures of working within a police service that has traditionally been dominated by non-Aboriginal people."

Saskatchewan agrees. We have received assurances from the RCMP and the municipal police services that they are committed to implementing these recommendations.

The Saskatchewan Police Commission began working with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in 2004-2005 to review the current process for qualifying municipal police recruits. Among other matters, this review is considering the safeguards required to ensure that candidates who exhibit racist views are rejected. The review will be completed in 2005-2006.

The Municipal Police Discipline Regulations, 1991, contain provisions that create a disciplinary offence for officers who display unbecoming conduct, provide authority for the Chief of Police to prescribe remedial training that must be completed to the Chief's satisfaction, and provide authority for the Chief to respond to allegations regarding breaches of conduct or behaviour. The Saskatchewan Police Commission will examine the Regulations to ensure that they adequately address these recommendations. In 2005-2006, the Saskatchewan Police Commission will also work with Aboriginal representatives and the police to find ways for the police services to deal with racist views and comments.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice is providing funding to the RCMP and municipal police services for 18 new police positions. One RCMP position will be assigned to develop an Aboriginal recruitment strategy and one to work with the RCMP Cadet Program. Saskatchewan Justice will work with municipal police services to ensure their participation in development of the recruitment strategy. The recruitment strategy will look at ways to attract Aboriginal candidates into policing and ensure Aboriginal recruits are provided with the necessary supports to achieve career success.

The Government will develop five new Community Tripartite Agreements (CTAs) over three years. These agreements are between First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan to provide policing on reserves. Currently there are 31 CTAs with 45 First Nations that cover about 78 per cent of the on-reserve population of Saskatchewan. The File Hills Police Service is in the process of becoming the province's first self-administered First Nations police service. The province is interested in exploring options for further development of self-administered policing services.

5.2 "... all police services invite members of the First Nations and Métis communities to evaluate the effectiveness of existing cultural awareness programs and implement changes as required."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2004-2005, the Saskatchewan Police College developed a partnership with the First Nations University of Canada to deliver several components of its cultural awareness training. Recruits now receive 35.5 hours of cultural awareness training. In 2005-2006, the Saskatchewan Police Commission will encourage all police agencies to seek input from local First Nations and Métis groups to review and develop policies, practices and curriculum for cultural awareness programs.

5.3.1 "... urban police services have a First Nations and Métis staffing component that is equal in percentage to the respective populations."

5.3.2 "... recommends to the RCMP that Community Police Boards and Police Management Boards participate in the selection, posting and orientation of RCMP members to detachments that serve their community."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Government of Saskatchewan will fund an additional 49 police positions over the next three years, with an emphasis on recruiting Aboriginal officers. In 2005-2006, Government will provide funding for 18 new police positions. The funding includes 11 positions for the RCMP; nine policing positions for northern communities, one position to develop an Aboriginal recruitment strategy and one to support the RCMP Cadet program. Saskatchewan Justice will work with municipal police services to ensure their participation in development of the recruitment strategy. The recruitment strategy will look at ways to attract Aboriginal candidates into policing and ensure Aboriginal recruits are provided with the necessary supports to achieve career success.

Saskatchewan Justice will continue to work with the RCMP, northern communities and First Nations to ensure that community police boards and police management boards participate in selecting and orienting RCMP members to local detachments.

The Government will develop five new Community Tripartite Agreements (CTAs) over three years. These agreements are between First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan to provide policing on reserves. Currently there are 31 CTAs with 45 First Nations that cover about 78 per cent of the on-reserve population of Saskatchewan. The File Hills Police Service is in the process of becoming the province's first self-administered First Nations police service. The province is interested in exploring options for further development of self-administered policing services.

5.4 "... the Government of Saskatchewan, in view of the fact that it invests in community policing initiatives, conduct province-wide surveys every two years to monitor the degree of public satisfaction regarding community policing within all communities."

Saskatchewan agrees. We will raise this issue with the RCMP and the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police to determine how this recommendation could be implemented.

5.5.1 "... Saskatchewan Justice and the Aboriginal Policing Directorate in the federal Solicitor General's office ensure that Community Police Boards and Police Management Boards receive adequate resourcing and training to ensure that community based policing is supported and successful in all communities."

5.5.2 "... Police Management Boards and Community Police Boards that share one police service be amalgamated and ensure equal representation."

5.5.3 "... Police officers working in First Nations and Métis communities, including urban neighbourhoods with high First Nations and Métis populations, be required to meet regularly with Elders and other community leaders in order to learn more about the culture of the people they are working with."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will provide additional training and support to police management boards and community police boards. Saskatchewan Justice supports the amalgamation of police management boards and community police boards where this is desired by communities, and will work closely with those communities to overcome jurisdictional issues so that amalgamation can occur. The department will also work with the federal government to increase funding for these programs, and with the RCMP and municipal police services to increase the interaction between police, Elders and community leaders.

5.6 "... all police services be required to prepare reports to justify any decisions that do not divert matters extra-judicially."

Saskatchewan does not agree with this approach. In appropriate cases, Saskatchewan encourages the use of police discretion to respond in ways that do not involve judicial proceedings. There is evidence that this approach is working.

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* contains a requirement for police officers to consider options other than charges. In 2003 there was a 36 per cent increase in police warnings to youth who committed less serious offences and a slight increase in referrals to extrajudicial sanctions. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to encourage the use of alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions (criminal cases referred by the police to a community-based agency with the approval of the Crown prosecutor, under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*) through training for the police and networking between the police and community-based justice programs.

5.7 "... the Government of Saskatchewan establish emergency detoxification facilities in cooperation with municipalities immediately in La Ronge, Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina. In remote areas, the Commission recommends that these facilities are incorporated into the local hospital, or in these remote communities, provision be made for sobering up houses as an alternative to drunk tanks."

Saskatchewan agrees. We will support the development of alternatives to holding intoxicated individuals in custody through the Alcohol and Drug Strategy. Through the recent appointment of Mr. Graham Addley as legislative secretary for the review on substance abuse and prevention, the government is reviewing its alcohol and drug addiction policies and programs.

The 2005-2006 budget includes funding to Saskatchewan Health for a provincial Alcohol and Drug Strategy. The Strategy will focus on youth, Aboriginal people, people who have no fixed residence, and northern residents. New initiatives to combat the use of Crystal Meth are part of this comprehensive strategy.

Additional services will offer a safe place where young people can withdraw from alcohol and drugs and stabilize physically, emotionally and socially. More brief detoxification services will provide for short-term stays for people to stabilize from serious drug abuse. Mobile treatment operations will be created to meet the needs of northern communities, and community outreach centres will help street youth and families with children who have serious substance abuse issues.

5.8 "... Government of Saskatchewan, in cooperation with municipalities, establish detoxification facilities for youth in Saskatchewan."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Health plans to establish short-stay (4 to 10 days) youth stabilization services that would serve the entire province.

5.9.1 "... increased use of video recording equipment by RCMP and municipal police services."

5.9.2 "... an Aboriginal liaison worker or volunteer individual be available for First Nations and Métis people upon their arrival at a police station or detachment office."

Saskatchewan agrees. Several police services have already implemented video cameras in police detention areas, police cars and other areas, to help determine the facts in cases where there are allegations of abuse. Police services will continue to implement cameras as resources allow.

Police services welcome community participation. Saskatchewan Justice will work with police services to explore ways of implementing 5.9.2.

5.10 "... Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, governments of Canada and Saskatchewan work together to develop an independent complaints investigation agency that will meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and non-Aboriginal people with the objective of having such an agency in place by April 1, 2005."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Province will introduce legislative amendments in 2005 to create a new process for handling public complaints against municipal police services. The new process includes establishment of an independent Police Complaints Commission. The Commission will include First Nations and Métis people and will have its own investigative staff. The new Commission will have the authority to investigate all allegations involving criminal, statutory and disciplinary matters that involve a member of the public.

The new model will include a continued role for the FSIN Special Investigations Unit, which has been doing important work in reviewing complaints against the police and other organizations, referring matters to the appropriate organization for investigation, and supporting people with filing complaints.

5.11 "... the Implementation Commissioner monitor and oversee the establishment of a complaints agency that will reflect and respect the spirit and intent of the existing Special Investigations Unit."

Saskatchewan does not agree with establishing an Office of the Implementation Commissioner, but strongly supports the work of the FSIN Special Investigations Unit. The current proposal for the new police complaints process includes a continued role for the Special Investigations Unit.

JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

6.1 "... the Government of Saskatchewan encourage and support the participation of potential First Nations and Métis jurors with the provision of resources for childcare and transportation where necessary."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will begin implementing initiatives to support the participation of Aboriginal people on juries such as increasing the fees paid for jury duty and providing increased resources for transportation and mileage to court for potential jurors, where necessary.

6.2 "... the Cree Court concept expand both geographically and linguistically so that a First Nations or Métis person may attend court proceedings conducted in their own language."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, an Aboriginal Provincial Court Party will be established in Meadow Lake. The Aboriginal Court Party, which will travel to a number of court points in northwestern Saskatchewan, will include a full-time translator.

In 2005-2006, two Justices of the Peace will be appointed in northern communities – one to a Cree-speaking community and one to a Dene-speaking community. Cree and Dene-speaking people will be recruited for these appointments. Justices of the Peace are citizens appointed by Order-in-Council to perform specific administrative and judicial functions of the Provincial Court.

6.3 "... all levels of court in Saskatchewan inform First Nations and Métis people appearing in court that they have the right to receive translation services, so that they fully understand the proceedings."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Justice currently provides Dene translation services in La Ronge and court points served from that community. Cree and Dene translation services are also available in Prince Albert and court points served from Prince Albert. In 2005-2006, translation services will be improved in the North, beginning with the recruitment of a Dene translator in the Meadow Lake Provincial Court office to provide translation services at court points where the Dene language is spoken. The department will conduct a review to identify any remaining gaps and develop a plan to address them.

6.4 "... the Government of Saskatchewan gather representatives from the Court of Queen's Bench and the Provincial Court, together with at least one Métis and one First Nations northern representative along with representatives from the Government of Canada to explore ways to address a more satisfying and economically affordable solution to bringing family law matters to the North."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will provide northern communities with access to workshops about parenting after separation or divorce. The workshop was developed for Aboriginal peoples and will be provided in an interactive CD format so that it can be delivered in remote locations.

Further discussion will occur at the Implementation Tables.

6.5 "... all courts be fully resourced by the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan to include the critical component of community involvement."

Saskatchewan agrees with the importance of community involvement. Government has provided funding to the Prince Albert Grand Council to support community involvement in the Cree Court Party. Saskatchewan Justice will continue to involve communities in sentencing and develop ways for sentences to be served in the community.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Provincial Court will implement Justice of the Peace programs at one northern Cree-speaking community and one northern Dene-speaking community, increasing community access to justice proceedings.

6.6 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, to ensure equitable and fair representation in the courts, appoint First Nations and Métis persons to sit as judges at every level of Court within Saskatchewan."

Saskatchewan agrees. The provincial government is committed to a Provincial Court that is representative of Saskatchewan communities. As more Aboriginal people enter the legal profession, opportunities will arise for the appointment of more First Nations and Métis judges. The Province will encourage the federal government to adopt a similar position with respect to appointments to the Court of Queen's Bench and Court of Appeal.

6.7 "... all levels of government encourage and promote court points in First Nations and Métis communities where suitable facilities can be provided and maintained by these governments; in the alternative, these governments should begin to provide suitable video and audio links between inaccessible First Nations and Métis communities and the courts."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will implement two videoconferencing projects in northern locations. We will support the establishment of additional circuit points in First Nations and Métis communities where possible, given the number of cases, geographic accessibility and whether there are suitable court facilities available. We will also explore the feasibility of developing videoconferencing with First Nations and Métis communities.

6.8 "... all levels of court be encouraged to use community based sentences for all offences (unless specifically prohibited by law) and that every level of government redirect resources to fund community based projects and help to facilitate community participation in sentencing."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Justice fully supports community-based sentences in the appropriate circumstances. In imposing a sentence, the courts must consider protection of the community; rehabilitation of the offender; deterring the offender and others from criminal conduct; and whether the public would support the sentence. For some offences community-based sentences are not appropriate. Saskatchewan has supported amendments to the *Criminal Code* that could limit use of conditional sentences in cases of serious violence such as child abuse, sexual assault and family violence.

6.9 "... a Therapeutic Court, preferably mobile, with the capacity to address issues such as alcohol and other addictions, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, families in crisis and family violence, be immediately established and implemented in Saskatchewan and that new funding be provided specifically by all departments and levels of government, including First

Nations and Métis governments, to facilitate an integrated response to the root causes of criminal behaviour."

Saskatchewan agrees with the benefits of therapeutic approaches. North Battleford currently has a Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court, which focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders. If an accused person pleads guilty to a domestic-related offence and wishes to participate in the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court (with the agreement of the Crown prosecutor and defence lawyer), the accused is referred to community-based anger management or family violence programs, and the case is adjourned. They must provide proof to the Court that they are attending the treatment program until they complete it, at which time they are sentenced.

A therapeutic domestic violence court will be implemented in 2005-2006 in the Saskatoon Provincial Court.

The Province is seeking federal funding to implement a therapeutic drug court in 2005-2006, which will focus primarily on young Aboriginal adults (18 to 25 years old) who have drug and alcohol abuse problems and have committed a criminal offence.

6.10 "... the Government of Saskatchewan continue to work with communities, in collaboration with the Government of Canada and First Nations and Métis Governments, to establish community justice programs which will qualify as Alternative Measures programs under S.717 of the Criminal Code of Canada."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan is one of the highest users in Canada of alternative measures as a response to youth and adult offending. We support community-based agencies, many of which are operated by Aboriginal governments or organizations that work with alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions (criminal cases referred by the police to a community-based agency with the approval of the Crown prosecutor, under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*). These agencies receive approximately 6,000 referrals each year for adult alternative measures and youth extrajudicial sanctions.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will enhance existing programs to enable them to accept approximately 1,000 more adult referrals. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will also consult with communities in the northwest and southern regions of the province to determine whether they are interested in developing community justice programs.

6.11.1 "... an Aboriginal Liaison person (or other approved community designate) participate in the decision as to whether to refer any alleged criminal behaviour to the Alternative Measures program."

6.11.2 "... the Aboriginal liaison person (or community designate) have the ability to apply to the Implementation Commissioner's Office to review a decision whether to refer alleged criminal behaviour to Alternative Measures. The Implementation Commissioner's Office must have the authority to access all

material relating to this decision, to review it, and to advocate for the reversal of the decision where appropriate."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle that community input should be considered in referring matters to alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions, recognizing that the Crown prosecutor is obligated by the *Criminal Code* to make the decision about referrals. In Saskatoon, the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the John Howard Society review cases to determine their appropriateness for referral. Together they make a recommendation to the Crown prosecutor about the most appropriate way to handle the matter. Discussion is taking place in other communities to adopt this approach. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will explore additional ways to gather community input.

6.12 "... the Government of Canada amend s. 717(1)(e) of the *Criminal Code of Canada* and S.10.2(e) of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* to read as follows: (e)the person accepts responsibility for their actions or does not contest the act or omission that forms the basis of the offence that the person is alleged to have committed."

Saskatchewan does not agree. Accepting responsibility is a key principle of restorative justice.

6.13 "... all offences, whether Provincial Regulatory offences or *Criminal Code of Canada* offences, including spousal assaults and excepting homicide, be eligible for Alternate Measures."

Saskatchewan does not agree. Saskatchewan is very supportive of restorative justice responses in appropriate cases. We support community-based agencies that work with alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions. These agencies receive approximately 6,000 referrals for adult alternative measures and youth extrajudicial sanctions each year. In Regina there is a specific alternative measures program to handle first car thefts. The Saskatoon Tribal Council has recently implemented a specific alternative measures program to handle break and enter offences. Both of these are part of integrated, targeted crime reduction strategies in these communities.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will enhance existing programs to enable them to accept approximately 1,000 more adult referrals.

There are a number of offences where alternative measures are not appropriate. Domestic violence, child abuse, drinking and driving offences and serious personal injury offences are just some examples. Public safety, the need to hold offenders accountable for the crime and the importance of maintaining public confidence in the justice system are factors that weigh against the use of alternative measures for these and certain other crimes.

6.14 "... all levels of government work towards the closure of incarceration spaces and divert resources thus saved to community-based alternatives."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. The Province strongly supports efforts to reduce the reliance

on incarceration and to use community-based interventions creatively and effectively. There is evidence that this approach is working because the number of youth being remanded or sentenced to custody in Saskatchewan has been gradually declining over the past five years. In 2003-2004, the average annual daily counts of youth in custody dropped to 261, compared to an average of 319 in 2002-2003. Custody counts in the first 10 months of 2004-2005 declined a further 10 per cent from the same period in 2003-2004, to an average daily count of 235.

In response to lower custody counts, three facilities were closed in the first quarter of 2004-2005. In January 2005, an additional unit was permanently closed. Resources from reduced custody spaces have been redirected to initiatives such as additional young offenders community programming; extrajudicial sanctions programs; reintegration programming delivered by Tribal Councils; targeted crime reduction initiatives; and the addition of 15 community youth workers.

For the past two years Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety has emphasized strengthening the supports and services provided to youth serving their sentences in the community. This is in line with the objectives of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and with research about the importance of matching the level of risk to re-offend with the level of service provided. Throughout 2005-2006 to 2007-2008, Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to support the development of community-based interventions and build on relationships with other partners to implement this recommendation.

6.15 "... adult correctional centres, youth custody facilities, and the Correctional Service of Canada work cooperatively with community justice programs, Probation Services and the offender in the design and implementation of reintegration plans."

Saskatchewan agrees. We will continue to implement the Community Safety Plan model, which involves integrated case management plans that are developed for each offender, in partnership with family, other government departments, and community agencies. We will also continue to implement staff training and involve additional First Nations, Tribal Councils and community-based organizations for reintegration services.

6.16.1 "... all levels of Government should assist in the establishment and funding of Community Justice Committees."

6.16.2 "... members and employees of Community Justice Committees be appropriately remunerated."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety currently provide training for members of community justice committees and some funding to community justice committees that operate on First Nations. In 2005-2006, we will explore options for expanding the number of community justice committees in rural areas and providing some financial support for training and administrative costs. Because volunteerism is an important aspect of

community justice committees, remuneration for community justice committee members is not currently being considered.

6.17 "... a comprehensive list be created, and regularly maintained, of all community based justice services available by the Government of Saskatchewan. This list should be provided to all prosecutors, legal aid lawyers and private defence counsel."

Saskatchewan agrees. This list will be created in 2005-2006 and will be available on the Saskatchewan Justice website. Crown prosecutors, Legal Aid lawyers and defence counsel will be notified when the list is posted to the website.

6.18 "... a pre-charge screening process with community involvement be immediately implemented throughout Saskatchewan by the Government of Saskatchewan. As part of pre-charge screening, Crown prosecutors should be instructed specifically to consider whether the matter in question could be referred to a community based justice initiative as an alternative to Court."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Saskatchewan Justice currently supports the pre-charge screening project in Prince Albert that considers issues such as the appropriate charge in a particular case and whether a matter could be referred. Laying charges or making post-charge referrals may be the most appropriate response in some cases, depending on factors such as the seriousness of the matter. The police who respond to an incident are often in the best position to assess the appropriate response, and laying a charge does not preclude a post-charge referral in appropriate cases.

Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety support community-based agencies that provide adult alternative measures and youth extrajudicial sanctions. Police services and Crown prosecutors strongly support these methods. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to work with police, Crown prosecutors and community-based agencies to increase the number of pre-charge referrals, expand the capacity of community-based agencies to accept referrals, and foster positive working relationships between police, Crown prosecutors and community-based justice programs.

6.19 "... the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission create First Nations and Métis articling positions and actively recruit First Nations and Métis lawyers."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission is strongly in favour of the articling program and will continue working to hire more Aboriginal lawyers.

6.20 "... the Government of Saskatchewan provide a toll-free telephone line where people can get reliable, up-to-date information on family law matters."

Saskatchewan agrees. A province-wide toll free telephone line has been implemented by the Family Justice Services Branch of Saskatchewan Justice. This service provides general information on family law matters but does not provide legal advice. The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission is investigating options

to enhance family law services, such as a toll free law information line on family law, video conferencing, satellite phones, and a call centre on legal issues.

6.21 "... additional funding be provided to Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission to hire more lawyers and provide broader legal services."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Province is seeking federal funding to support criminal and civil legal aid services. Saskatchewan is taking a leadership role in a national initiative regarding adequate funding for civil Legal Aid. These efforts will continue in 2005-2006 and beyond. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan will provide increased funding for a Legal Aid position for the Aboriginal Court Party.

6.22 "... a public education campaign be designed and implemented by all levels of Government directed at providing accurate information of the benefits of non-custodial alternatives to imprisonment and re-integration into the community."

Saskatchewan agrees. As the federal government has a significant role in the correctional system, and First Nations and Tribal Councils offer many reintegration programs, this issue will be referred to the Implementation Tables.

6.23 "... Correctional Service of Canada, Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety that access to cultural and spiritual programming, whether traditional or religious, be made more available to First Nations and Métis people who are incarcerated in Saskatchewan."

Saskatchewan agrees. All young offenders custody facilities have cultural programs. Coordinators work in partnership with local First Nations to design and deliver programs. The Prince Albert Youth Residence has developed a close relationship with the Prince Albert Grand Council Healing Project, which advises on program activities and offers Elder counseling services to youth. Elders provide traditional teachings, conduct sweat lodge ceremonies, teach arts and crafts and traditional cooking, and host pow wows and round dances.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will enhance reintegration and cultural programming by developing new youth reintegration programs in consultation with First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations; and staffing an Aboriginal Liaison Manager position in Corrections and Public Safety to work on policy and program issues with the FSIN and other Aboriginal organizations.

6.24 "... Recommends to the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan that more resources be provided to community service providers to develop and operate programs that aid offenders with their transition into the community when they are released from prison institutions."

Saskatchewan agrees. Increased community involvement in the reintegration of offenders benefits the offender and the community through effective ways to manage risk and reduce re-offending. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety will continue to work with other sectors to enhance reintegration supports. For 2005-2006, the Education of Youth in

Custody program will provide funding to school divisions to develop links with correctional facilities to improve the transition for youth moving between custody facilities and school, and to improve success in learning while the youth is in custody.

6.25 "... Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) that, prior to a change in legislation, and give the healing nature of ceremonies, medical leave be granted to detained offenders to attend spiritual ceremonies outside the institution for the purpose of healing if the offender has been involved in cultural programming in the institution, has the support of the Elders and Correctional Service of Canada, will be strictly supervised during the absence and has the support of the National Parole Board.

The Province will not respond, as this recommendation is addressed to the Government of Canada.

6.26 "... Pine Grove Correctional Centre continue and expand its work with community agencies to provide programming which addresses the distinct needs of women in prison institutions and that resources be available for them to do so."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety will continue to work with Pine Grove Correctional Centre and other correctional centres in the province to improve links with the community and meet the needs of women who are making the transition from the institution to the community.

6.27 "... Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan to develop and deliver programs dealing with the effect of parental incarceration on children and the corresponding stresses of separation and reunification of families."

The Province will not respond, as this recommendation is directed to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.

6.28 "... Recommends to Corrections and Public Safety that plans for reintegration into the community be created as soon as youth are admitted to youth facilities."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety already develops Community Safety Plans for each young offender upon admission to a youth facility. We will continue to promote the use of these plans and ensure that staff are complying with the requirement to develop the plans. Current programs are being evaluated to improve their potential for supporting reintegration.

6.29 "... all levels of government immediately design and implement a funding strategy to fully resource the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, particularly those provisions that address community supervision of youth."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Province has accessed all available federal funding, reallocated funding and obtained some additional funds to ensure that we could adequately implement the *Youth Criminal*

Justice Act (YCJA) when it came into force in 2003. Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety are working with the Regina Police Service and RCMP to implement a police cautioning program in 2005-2006 that will provide police with an additional tool to hold youth accountable for their actions. Saskatchewan Justice, Health, and Corrections and Public Safety are continuing to monitor the impact and issues related to the YCJA on an annual basis, and Justice will continue developing materials and providing training about information sharing under the Act. This will enable justice officials to balance the need for privacy and information sharing, which is an important feature of the YCJA.

6.30 "... Government of Canada appoint additional First Nations and Métis persons as members of the National Parole Board."

The Province will not respond, as this recommendation is addressed to the Government of Canada.

6.31 "... An evaluation of probation and community justice services be undertaken to ensure such services are meeting the needs of individuals and communities."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety has begun a major initiative to assess its probation and community justice services. The Correctional Program Assessment Inventory is an assessment tool that can be used to determine how closely services align with effective correctional practices and interventions, and measures how effective the program is in reducing re-offending. In 2005-2006, assessment teams will be applying it in programs such as the Family Violence Program in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region and the Adult Bail Program in Prince Albert Community Operations.

6.32 "... the options of alternative measures, bail, probation and conditional sentences be employed instead of the use of remand and incarceration whenever possible."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will increase resources to community service providers that will be directly involved in delivering services such as supervision, support and transportation for accused persons. This will help to reduce the use of remand.

With up to 6,000 referrals per year, Saskatchewan has consistently been one of the highest users in Canada of alternative measures as a response to youth and adult offending. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice will enhance existing programs to enable them to accept approximately 1,000 more adult referrals.

Saskatchewan Justice and Corrections and Public Safety will continue to expand the use of alternative measures and extrajudicial sanctions, support the use of bail, probation and conditional sentences, and support other partners in providing services that would enable community-based programs to work with more offenders in the community.

6.33 "... bail officers, probation officers and Conditional Sentence Supervisors be scheduled so that their services are available on a 24-hour basis."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety provides 24-hour coverage for certain programs. In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will increase resources for judicial interim release programs (also known as bail), to enable people to remain in their communities with adequate supervision and support while they await trial. Corrections and Public Safety will also offer expanded hours for probation officers in areas where targeted crime reduction initiatives are located.

ELIMINATING RACISM: CREATING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IN SASKATCHEWAN

7.1 "... the Executive Director of Saskatchewan Culture and Heritage report in writing to the Implementation Commissioner and shall clearly indicate progress made in carrying through the recommendations in carrying through the recommendations put forward in the Multiculturalism report."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Culture, Youth and Recreation will ensure this report is delivered to the Implementation Tables in 2005-2006.

7.2 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, specifically Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Saskatchewan Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs, in consultation with representatives from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation – Saskatchewan:

a) create a directory for Saskatchewan of First Nations and Métis people who are recognized and respected as trainers/ facilitators on cultural awareness and the promotion of healthy relationships between the First Nations and Métis cultures and the non-Aboriginal population;

b) that the directory available to organizations, government departments and members of the justice system wishing to provide culture awareness training to their employees; and,

c) that the list be reviewed and updated on an annual basis."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Relations will work with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Métis Family and Community Justice Services, and others to create a directory. This directory will list First Nations and Métis people who are recognized and respected as trainers or facilitators on cultural awareness. This directory will be updated regularly and posted on the department's website.

7.3 "... media outlets in Saskatchewan create an external community editorial board, including First Nations and Métis representatives, to review stories in the media and provide feedback to the producers and editors of stories on the portrayal of First Nations and Métis people."

The Province will not respond, as this recommendation is directed to Saskatchewan media outlets.

7.4 "... the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation take a lead role and work with other relevant government departments, agencies, and non-governmental organizations, along with representation from the First Nations and Métis communities, to coordinate and host an anti-racism conference to coincide with March 21, 2005, the annual day on which Saskatchewan supports the Elimination of Racism and the centenary of Saskatchewan. This conference should be offered by videoconference, wherever possible, to ensure northern communities can participate."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. A one-time anti-racism conference would not be enough to eliminate racism and create lasting change. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice and First Nations and Métis Relations will work with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to develop an action plan for addressing racism.

7.5 "... the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, along with representatives from the Government of Saskatchewan, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and Métis Nation - Saskatchewan establish a committee to coordinate anti-racism activities in 2005."

7.6 "... the Government of Saskatchewan design and implement a media campaign which includes the use of public service announcements, as much as possible, September 2005, with the assistance of First Nations and Métis people, to achieve the objectives below:

- **Provide all citizens of Saskatchewan an opportunity to reflect on the contributions of First Nations and Métis peoples over the last 100 years of this provinces' development;**
- **Establish a broad-based understanding of how to build and maintain constructive and positive relationships among First Nations, Métis and non-Aboriginal people; and**
- **Assist individuals and communities to identify and eliminate inequities and barriers based on racial and cultural differences.**

This public education strategy must go beyond 2005 and must include an evaluation component."

7.7 "... every person, and especially those in leadership positions, make a commitment to eliminate racism where it is present in day-to-day life."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Justice and First Nations and Métis Relations will work with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to develop an action plan for addressing racism.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH: REALIZING POTENTIAL

8.1 "... the Government of Saskatchewan initiate a study to determine the reasons for the high number of First Nations and Métis youth remanded to custody followed by a strategy to reduce these numbers by March 31, 2005."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety is developing a remand strategy for 2005-2006. The goal is to reduce the number of offenders remanded due to systems offences. Systems offences include bail violation, failure to appear in court or escaping custody.

In 2005-2006, Corrections and Public Safety will increase resources for judicial interim release programs (also known as bail), to enable people to remain in their communities with adequate supervision and support while they await trial. This will reduce the number of people who are remanded into custody before their hearing. Corrections and Public Safety will also offer expanded hours for probation officers in areas where targeted crime reduction initiatives are located.

8.2 "... the Government of Saskatchewan develop a mental health services plan to prevent and treat mental disorders among children and youth not involved in the youth justice system."

Saskatchewan agrees. Saskatchewan Health is currently conducting a province-wide consultation to develop a comprehensive plan to improve child and youth mental health services. The consultation is to be completed by August 2005.

8.3 "... the Government of Canada meet its legal, fiscal and historical obligations to the education of First Nations people. This includes ensuring adequate funding for post secondary education and a commitment to engaging First Nations children and youth in achieving educational attainment both on and off-reserve."

Saskatchewan agrees. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, as well as the Ministers responsible for Aboriginal Affairs have raised the issue of Aboriginal education as a priority. A national strategy is being developed.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will work with the FSIN to ensure First Nations schools and provincial schools share educational standards. This will support a smooth transition for Aboriginal students who move between First Nations school systems and the provincial educational system.

8.4 "...the partners in the Policy Framework for Saskatchewan's education system develop and deliver education outside the traditional school system to those not presently attending school between the ages of 6 and 16. This will require identification of these children and youth and subsequently finding creative means of ensuring their right to an education is respected."

Saskatchewan agrees. A key component of School*Plus* is the Student Data System (SDS),

launched in October 2004. SDS is a tool to identify young people not attending school and develop initiatives to improve attendance (recommendation 8.4). All students in grades 10 to 12 in provincial schools; 95 per cent of kindergarten to grade 9 students in provincial schools; 80 per cent of First Nations school's students, and youth in educational programs such as Orcadia Youth Custody Residence (Yorkton), Kilburn Hall Youth Facility (Saskatoon) and Musqua School (Saskatoon) are included in the registry.

8.5 "...endorses the direction of School^{PLUS} but is concerned that without resources and a collaborative approach, School^{PLUS} will not succeed. Therefore, it is recommended that the Government of Saskatchewan ensure that School^{PLUS} is a priority and fully resourced."

Saskatchewan agrees. School^{PLUS} is about using the resources we have to meet the needs of children, youth and their families, and empowering schools and communities to work together. The Integrated School-Linked Services Strategy of School^{PLUS} brings together school divisions, health regions and other human services to pool resources and establish comprehensive plans for delivering services in an integrated manner.

In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will continue supporting the implementation of School^{PLUS} with funding through the Foundation Operating Grant. The department will also work on advancing the implementation of School^{PLUS} province-wide. One way this will occur is through the Indicators framework, which includes indicators related to education and well-being outcomes for young Aboriginal people. This will provide the provincial education system with information about improving programs for Aboriginal youth. The initial Indicators Report is scheduled to be released in 2005-2006.

8.6 "...all urban municipalities consider the need for transitional or orientation programs for First Nations and Métis youth who move from reserve or rural areas to the urban centres."

Saskatchewan agrees. In 2005-2006, Saskatchewan Learning will work with the FSIN to ensure First Nations schools and provincial schools share educational standards. This will support a smooth transition for Aboriginal students who move between First Nations school systems and the provincial educational system.

8.7 "...the Government of Canada consult with First Nations and Métis people to establish indicators of quality of life for 2004 for First Nations and Métis children in Saskatchewan's urban environments and that in 2009, these indicators be re-evaluated by investigating actions and initiatives undertaken to improve the quality of life of these children."

Although not directed to the Province, the Province asks to be consulted about developing these indicators. Such indicators could provide valuable information about improvements in the social and economic conditions in First Nations and Métis communities.

8.8 "...by April 1, 2005 the Government of Canada establish a Children's Advocate for Canada's First Nations and Métis children, reporting to Parliament, and accountable to First Nations and Métis people, with legislative authority to monitor and evaluate the impact of Canada's National Action Plan for Children, and be responsible to promote and protect the rights of First Nations and Métis children."

The Province will not respond, as this recommendation is addressed to the Government of Canada.

8.9 "...the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, in consultation with Saskatchewan's Children's Advocate, collectively review options to ensure that First Nations and Métis children, their families and their communities are afforded services and that advocacy services are provided in an accessible and culturally sensitive manner that respects their full human dignity."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Saskatchewan Community Resources and Employment is working closely with First Nations to ensure that child and family services include approaches that are consistent with First Nations culture, values and traditions, to ensure that there is a seamless child welfare service on-and off-reserve.

The department is working with First Nations to address the recommendations of the Baby Andy Review (July 2003). A number of activities have been completed or are underway.

Community Resources and Employment is working with First Nations and Métis groups to develop policy and possibly legislation to support custom adoption. Custom adoption is an Aboriginal tradition and is a form of adoption that provides community and birth family involvement.

Community Resources and Employment is developing supports for kinship care arrangements in which children who have been deemed to be in need of protection will be placed with extended family or others who have a significant interest. The kinship care approach is well received by First Nations and Métis people. Discussions with First Nations are underway to ensure all aspects of the approach have been considered.

8.10 "...all governments transcend jurisdictions in the best interest of our children and our collective futures by creating a Declaration that addresses relationships between jurisdictions and to create long-term Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Children and Youth Action Plans."

Saskatchewan agrees it is important to act in the best interests of our children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child already commits the federal and provincial governments to act on this principle. We will work with our partners to support practical initiatives that focus on seamless service delivery and best meet the needs of children.

8.11 "...all governments collaborate to sign a declaration and create long-term Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Children and Youth Action Plans that transcend all jurisdictions in the best interests of our children and our collective future.

And that the Declaration be signed addressing the relationships between jurisdictions. The Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Children and Youth Action Plans must involve First Nations and Métis youth and all levels of government to create holistic Action Plans that must include social and capital infrastructure projects.

These Action Plans are based on the principles of inclusion of First Nations and Métis children and youth, integrated services, involved communities and future focused."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle. Saskatchewan Culture, Youth and Recreation particularly supports the principle of engaging youth in leadership opportunities and providing them a voice in governance.

8.12 "... the Implementation Commissioner be vested with the power and authority to monitor the development and implementation of the Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Children and Youth Action Plans.

Saskatchewan does not agree with establishing an Office of the Implementation Commissioner.

IMPLEMENTATION

10.1 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan be required to report to their respective legislatures within six months of the release of this report on what action it has taken relating to the recommendations in this report."

Saskatchewan agrees in principle that each partner should provide this information to their respective governing bodies. This issue will be referred to the Implementation Tables.

10.2 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan, through discussions at a working group initiated by this Commission, jointly support and establish an Office of the Implementation Commissioner."

Saskatchewan does not agree. We strongly support the involvement of the FSIN and Métis organizations in deciding how to implement the Commission's recommendations. Government would prefer to focus resources on implementing reforms, establishing new programs and initiatives, and enhancing existing community-based justice programs. Discussions about implementing the Commission's recommendations will occur at the Implementation Tables, which include the provincial government, federal government, FSIN and Métis representatives.

10.3 "... the Working Group, consisting of the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, continue to meet regularly following the release of this final report. Their objective should be to lead the way in the creation of an Office of the Implementation Commissioner by October 1, 2005."

10.4 "... the Implementation Commissioner be an independent officer who has inter-jurisdictional authority and will annually report to the respective Legislative Assemblies through an identified mechanism (a standing committee, a council, regional body or commission)."

10.5 "... the Implementation Commissioner is appointed, by agreement of the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Métis Nation – Saskatchewan by April 1, 2005."

10.6 "... the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan share the cost of establishing and operating this office with the percentage to be negotiated by the two levels of government."

10.7 "... In addition to the authority to execute a defined mandate, that adequate resources be provided by the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, to the Implementation Commissioner to establish an office and a process to receive advice from others to ensure that the work of the Implementation Commissioner remains future focused and accountable to the community."

Saskatchewan does not agree. However, we strongly support the involvement of the FSIN and Métis organizations at the Implementation Tables in deciding how to implement the Commission's recommendations.

All quotations in the Appendix are taken from:

Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform. Legacy of Hope: An Agenda For Change, Volume 1, Final Report from the Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform. Saskatchewan, 2004.

May 2005